CBW
Coach and Bus Week
The PSV industry's news weekly • 15 June 1996 • Issue 222

AMAZING MAY

Dramatic rise in coach sales

FRENCH CONNECTION

P&O launches coach trips

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Mobilis shows its pace

CBW classified good for business

LIBERATED

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All the PSV news 4-14 ● Legal News 16&17 ● Tour News 18&20 ● Marksman 22&23 ● Diary 25 ● Letters 26 ● Minitest 31&33 ● Deals 34-36 ● People 55

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Readerlink back issues department
0181 868 6625

Typesetting and origination: Meridian In Colour, Newark Road, Peterborough

Printing: William Gibbons, Wolverhampton

CBW is available only by pre-paid subscription
Domestic subscription rate is £49 per year; Europe £92 and worldwide air mail £124
All rates include postage

Contributions should be sent to The Editor, *Coach and Bus Week*, Wentworth House, Wentworth Street, Peterborough PE1 1DS

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ISSN 1351-3877
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CBW Coach and Bus Week

Success, but...

THE Vehicle Inspectorate may have hailed last weekend's Operation Tourist a success but the publicity generated was not all satisfactory from a coach and bus industry view point.

Let us put the results of this blitz on coach safety in perspective.

Using an army of over 100 VI staff, Operation Tourist was co-ordinated by Avon and Somerset Police and involved police from 11 other forces across the south of England.

Using 26 locations, mainly motorway service stations, vehicle examiners examined 849 coaches and buses while traffic examiners checked 765 (not necessarily the same vehicles). Clearly these were random checks and not all PSVs out on the road that Saturday were subject to scrutiny.

Although 52 were given immediate prohibitions and 96 delayed prohibitions, there were no horror stories for the press to get their teeth into. Indeed, you could argue that, with 94 per cent of all vehicles checked having no faults, the result reflects well on the industry. Last year just 78 per cent out of 735 vehicles were given a clean bill of health.

However, defects found included bald tyres, oil leaks and jammed emergency doors. This may have been a small minority but it was six per cent too many, particularly when Operation Tourist was given advance publicity (*CBW*, 25 May).

You would not expect the VI nor Avon and Somerset Police to announce the exact date and location of the checks, yet all operators should be aware that checks of this nature are now part and parcel of the ongoing drive to lift the profile of safety enforcement.

More checks this Summer cannot be ruled out.

Indeed, as long as they conform to the code of conduct which minimises disruption to passengers, they should be encouraged.

If the results continue to be good the industry has nothing to fear.

However, there were 102 alleged offences reported during Operation Tourist by the traffic examiners. These included drivers working in excess of their permitted hours, taking insufficient rest, and operating without an O-licence. We should be concerned that this figure represents 13.3 per cent of the vehicles checked.

Mike Morgan
Editor

events

14-15 September: UK Bus Driver of the Year Final, Princes Parade, Blackpool. Details from Margaret Buckley, Bus and Coach Training Ltd, 43 High Street, Rickmansworth, Herts WD3 1ET, tel: 01923 896607

16 September: Coaching For Pleasure Day, Legoland, Windsor. Details from Derrick J Alsop, secretary, Coach Tourism Council, 2 Sandown Road, Toton, Nottingham, NG9 6GN, tel/fax 0115 973 2260

22 September: Amberley Museum Open Top Bus Show, Houghton Bridge, Amberley, West Sussex. Details, send SAE to Howard Stenning, Open Top Bus Rally, Amberley Museum, Amberley, Arundel, West Sussex, BN18 9LT, tel 01798 831370, fax 01798 831831

1-3 October: Expocoach, Hall 3, NEC, Birmingham. Contact show manager, Mark Griffin on 01926 888123, fax 01926 888004

17 October: Buses Worldwide meeting, Fred Tallent Hall, Drummond Street, London NW1. Details from Ian Johnston, 3 Cypress Drive, Fleet, Hants, GU13 9HE

21-22 October: CPT annual conference, The Park Hotel, Cardiff. Details on 0171 831 7546, fax 0171 242 0053

21-24 October: Mitcar, Paris, Porte de Versailles, details on 00 33 1 41 29 97 27 fax 00 33 1 41 29 96 68

23-27 October: Autobus Rai 96, MECC, Maastricht, Holland. Will now also include small minibuses. Details, tel 00 31 20 549 1212, fax 00 31 20 646 4469

5-7 November: GNSS 96 — Global Navigation Satellite Systems Conference, The Church House Conference Centre, Dean's Yard, Westminster, London SW1P 3NZ. Details from The Director, The Royal Institute of Navigation, 1 Kensington Gore, London SW7 2AT, tel 0171 589 5021, fax 0171 823 8671

5-10 November: Bus 101, Hallen, Kortrijk, Belgium. Details from Mieke Glorieux, Bus 101, Motestraat 41, B-8800 Roeselare, Belgium, tel 00 32 51 22 60 60, fax 00 32 51 22 92 73

14 November: CTA's annual exhibition, Norbreck Castle Hotel, Blackpool. Details from Maggie McCoy on 0161 366 6685

19-21 November: Light Rail 96, Edinburgh International Conference Centre, 10th International Conference and Exhibition on electrifying urban public transport. Details from Suzanne Pealing, Transport Science, 17 Hope Street, Liverpool, L1 9BQ, tel 0151 707 0100

23 November: Coach Industry Awards, Purbeck Hall, Bournemouth. Entry forms from *CBW* to be returned before 31 July

▼ Coach

Shearings: 35 B10Ms

It's the same again for next year

by Mike Morgan

SHEARINGS, Europe's largest coach holiday tours operator, has taken delivery of its 35 Volvo B10M coaches for 1996 and immediately announced a repeat order for 1997.

All 35 coaches for next year will have Van Hool Alizee bodies and will be equipped to Shearings' customary high specification including 46 seats, all with safety belts, air-conditioning, toilet, servery, video, telephone and driver's bunk.

Jimmy King, Shearings' tour services director, said: "When we review our fleet replacement needs for any year, we look at that supplier who can provide the highest possible levels of vehicle specification and support at the lowest overall cost of ownership.

"Over many years, the Volvo/B10M has proved to be the winning combination — consistently providing the return we seek from any investment in the continued development and success of our operations."

● Volvo director product marketing Bill Russell moves to managing director of the company's dealership Yeates Bus & Coach from 24 June. Tony Harvey becomes sales and marketing director of Yeates.

Handover: Jimmy King and Volvo's Bill Russell

▼ Coach

Air-con firm taken over by its rival

End of uncertainties for the future of Sutrak

SUTRAK UK's German-based parent company has been taken over by the owner of Carrier, its major competitor in the transport air-conditioning market, ending months of speculation.

Rationalisation of the two product ranges is expected once the new owner, United Technologies (Carrier) Ltd, takes control and consolidates its new position as number one in the transport sector.

However, it's business as usual for the Northampton-based Sutrak UK company, which is 51 per cent owned by Dieter Weckerle of Germany. Managing director Peter Adams and works director Clive Faulkner have equal share of the balance. Sutrak will become the coach and bus division within the new organisation, while Carrier will serve other interests.

The takeover ends uncertainties of recent months, with United Technologies bringing financial strength and management expertise.

▼ Bus

Cambus buy gets OK

STAGECOACH has agreed to sell its Huntingdon depot and the former Cambus operations in Milton Keynes (*CBW*, 25 May).

Consequently consumer affairs minister John Taylor has given the green light to the acquisition by Stagecoach of Cambus Holdings, which will not be referred to the Monopolies and Mergers Commission.

The decision is in accordance with the advice of the Deputy Director General, Office of Fair Trading (DGFT).

Stagecoach has also agreed to comply with a number of behavioural undertakings applying to fares, service levels, tenders, responses to competition, the relationship of fares to costs, and the provision of information.

● Mr Taylor has decided not to refer the FirstBus takeover of Transit Holdings' Portsmouth operations, namely Portsmouth Transit, but Strathclyde PTA wants the MMC to investigate the FirstBus proposed takeover of SBH, owner of Strathclyde Buses and Kelvin Central.

■ See page 8

▼ Coach and Bus

VI host to French

THE Vehicle Inspectorate is to play host to 13 French traffic examiners. The week-long visit is designed to give the visitors an understanding of UK enforcement practices.

▼ Obituary

Death of Rod Davey

IT is with deep regret we announce that Rod Davey has died. Rod, 45, was well known in the PSV industry as a journalist, PR and transport consultant. He was a former colleague of the *CBW* editorial staff and will be greatly missed. He leaves daughter Justine, son Leon, and wife Margaret.

▼ Coach

On the right track

Improved results posted by Pullman Group for last financial year

by Andrew Jarosz

PULLMAN Group, the South London-based parent company of London Sightseeing Tour buses and the North Kent Express commuter coaches, has posted improved results for its last financial year — despite writing off losses of over £200,000 on the sale of its Atlas Bus subsidiary to Metroline of Harrow.

Turnover for the financial year ending 31 August 1995, increased by over 11 per cent from £9.8 million to £10.9 million, and pre-tax profits rose by 15.2 per cent from £335,000 to £386,000.

The profit margin rose from 3.4 per cent to 3.6 per cent, despite the losses associated with the disposal of the unprofitable Atlas Bus and Coach business and tendered route 52 to Metroline, with the operating profit growing by over 42 per cent from £531k to £756K.

Bottom line: things looking up for Pullman Group despite write-off

On the continuing business, turnover increased by nearly seven per cent from £9.6 million to £10.3 million, with operating profits growing by 82 per cent from £528k to £960k. London Coaches had another record breaking year, with a healthy tourist market which pushed up passenger numbers by 15 per cent. The company also purchased its Wandsworth depot from previous landlord London Transport for £1.2 million, which came from a long term loan from backer National Westminster Bank.

Performance of the main coaching subsidiary North Kent Road Car, now renamed London Coaches (Kent) Limited, started off disappointingly and necessitated a business restructuring during the year.

This was followed by a rebranding exercise for the North Kent Express and a positive turnaround was achieved. Sixteen high-spec coaches were purchased, with around 25 further new coaches being expected this Summer.

Md Pat Waterman praised the contribution of staff in helping the company to reshape itself.

▼ Coach

Fire hits Fargo

FIRE damage at the Rayne, Braintree, premises of Fargo Coachlines resulted in total loss of valuable records in its office building.

Owner Les Smith is appealing to operator colleagues and suppliers to help him rebuild his contact list.

Although some of Fargo's computer data was on back-up discs in a safe, these were severely damaged by heat.

Mr Smith says he is grateful to Distinctive Systems for helping retrieve the company's booking diary. Fargo's administration is being run from Mr Smith's house pending delivery of a new Portakabin.

Four of the 30-vehicle fleet were also damaged in the blaze.

● Contact Fargo Coachlines on 01376 321817

▼ Coach and Bus

Better in 'blitz'

OPERATION Tourist, the south of England coach safety blitz co-ordinated by Avon and Somerset Police, showed a major improvement in the standard of coaches and buses inspected.

Six per cent of the 849 vehicles checked received either an immediate or delayed prohibition compared with 22 per cent last year.

Of the 765 vehicles checked by traffic examiners, 102 offences were reported for further action. Meanwhile, out of 5,912 PSVs tested in the recent round of emission spot checks, only 211 received delayed prohibitions and 0.2 per cent immediates.

The CPT says PSVs are the cleanest vehicles on the road. President Ron Whittle said: "It's high time the coach and bus industry received some credit in this area."

▼ Coach and Bus

Room to move...

THE Confederation of Passenger Transport is due to move its London headquarters this month after more than 20 years at its rather cramped offices in Sardinia House - known affectionately as Sardine House. It is moving to an imposing address round the corner in Imperial House, Kingsway.

● ●● INSIDE TRANSIT THIS WEEK ● ●● INSIDE TRANSIT THIS WEEK ● ●●

News

Ceasefire ends Warrington war as operators agree to compromise. Why, after 18 months of head-to-head competition, British Bus subsidiary North Western and municipally-owned Warrington Borough Transport have reached agreement. Latest developments as rail franchising pace quickens and shroud of secrecy surrounds plans to privatise Sheffield Supertram. Why West Yorkshire PTE is to sell part of Bradford Interchange. What is happening to park-and-ride plans in York and Sheffield. Further details on the Parks takeover of Trathens. What lies behind the fares war between FirstBus subsidiary GM Buses North (Greater Manchester) and Blue Bus of Horwich.

Plus

How the big bus group shares have performed; analysis of tender results in Buckinghamshire; and full analysis of Pullman Group year end results.

● Fill in the subscription form now on page 55

In brief

Easy paying

A PILOT state-of-the-art travel payment system, MetroSmart, has been launched by West Yorkshire Passenger Transport Authority and Metro in conjunction with West Riding Buses and Yorkshire Buses. Trials of the system, developed by Wayfarer and Sisys, will last 18 months on the Dewsbury to Wakefield services 126/127.

Tickets touch

THE first high-tech point-of-sale touchscreen ticket machines for London Travelcards and bus passes have been unveiled in Hammersmith. ICL won the contract from London Transport for 1,700 machines for agents throughout London.

Nat Ex deal

NATIONAL Express has won its first overseas airport contract through a consultancy set up by its East Midlands airport subsidiary. It will provide top management for the Subic Bay International Airport in the Philippines.

Info system

EASTLEIGH bus station has installed a travel terminal system based on three 'intelligent' display units above the departure bays which handle up-to-the-minute information for 40,000 weekly passengers. Nexus Alpha designed the system.

EU spec guide

CONSULTANCY Europe Associates (CEA) Ltd, the British-based specialist EU information provider, has issued what it describes as the first easy-to-follow guide to European coach and bus technical specifications, bringing together more than 100 EU Directives affecting constructors and operators. For details tel 01636 610620.

▼ Coach and Bus

A May Zing!

Dramatic increase in last month's coach and bus registrations

By Mike Morgan

ALTHOUGH there was a slow start to 1996, coach and bus registrations during May are almost 16 per cent better than the same period last year compared with a small improvement of two per cent in April.

The coach sector experienced a dramatic recovery, lifting the total for the year above that of 1995 for the first time.

Consequently the latest figures supplied by the Society of Motor Manufacturers and Traders show that the year-to-date decline in registrations has been further cut from 8.5 per cent up to the end of April, to 3.5 per cent by the end of last month.

Of the main manufacturers of full-size PSVs only Volvo recorded a decline in registrations during May.

Dennis showed a significant increase of 70 vehicles, lifting it to first place on the totals for the month, just three ahead of Volvo. These two manufacturers between them accounted for 68 per cent of the market.

Scania strengthened its position in third place. It had 13.5 per cent of the monthly total and DAF Bus in fourth place accounted for one in 20 of all new PSVs put on the road.

Volvo further consolidated its coach market lead as the number of vehicles registered during May showed a welcome, but surprising 43.7 per cent increase. Total coach numbers for 1996 are now 1.9 per cent higher than the previous year.

Bus sales are hovering eight per cent lower than 1995 with Dennis moving ahead in the league table after the hiatus while a significant proportion of its Dart production switched from standard chassis to the recently-launched low-floor SLF.

COACH AND BUS REGISTRATIONS

	May		Year to Date			
	1996	1995	1996		1995	
	units	units	units	%	units	%
Volvo	148	191	798	44.4	859	46.1
Dennis	151	81	485	27.0	519	27.9
Scania	59	42	182	10.1	158	8.5
Optare	15	11	89	5.0	67	3.6
DAF Bus	22	16	78	4.3	94	5.0
Bova	15	0	32	1.8	25	1.3
Others	28	37	133	7.4	141	7.6
Total	438	378	1797	100	1863	100

COACH REGISTRATIONS

	May		Year to Date			
	1996	1995	1996		1995	
	units	units	units	%	units	%
Volvo	93	71	490	56.5	467	54.9
Dennis	34	16	104	12.0	104	12.2
Scania	40	32	94	10.8	97	11.4
DAF Bus	22	14	53	6.1	53	6.2
Bova	15	0	32	3.7	25	2.9
Others	23	25	94	10.9	105	12.4
Total	227	158	867	100	851	100

BUS REGISTRATIONS

	May		Year to Date			
	1996	1995	1996		1995	
	units	units	units	%	units	%
Dennis	117	65	381	41.0	415	41.0
Volvo	55	120	308	33.1	392	38.7
Optare	15	11	89	9.6	67	6.6
Scania	19	10	88	9.5	61	6.0
DAF Bus	0	2	25	2.7	41	4.1
Others	5	12	39	4.1	36	3.6
Total	211	220	930	100	1012	100

The above table details all vehicles on designated PSV underframes registered last month in Great Britain, Northern Ireland, the Isle of Man and Channel Islands.
Source: SMMT

▼ Coach

Team coach sports new livery

EAVESWAY Travel of Ashton-in-Makerfield has upgraded its all-DAF/Van Hool tour fleet. It has added a 32-seat SB3000WS, which sports a new livery and will serve as the team coach for Everton football club.

In the close season, the high-specification climate control and air-conditioned vehicle will lead the corporate hire fleet, as well as taking up duties during the Euro 96 tournament.

DAF/Van Hool SB3000WS is dedicated to Everton FC

It is fitted with 32 Royal Comfort Class recliners, with 10 tables, and features an offside centre servery with deep freezer, fridge, coffee percolator microwave, hot-air aircraft-type oven and two water heating systems. All seats are fitted with lap belts and there are three-point lap and diagonal belts on the driving and crew seats.

The stereo radio, cassette and PA system is complemented by an individual multi-channel headphone system above each seat. Four TV screens relay the colour video system and a 10-stack CD player is controllable from the dash.

● **Deals and Dealers three-page special — pages 33-35**

MetroRider

Britain's best selling midibus now has extra polish

OPTARE have added some impressive refinements to the world-beating MetroRider.

It was the first midibus ever to combine integral construction with heavy duty drivetrain and full disc braking.
Now it has a more powerful engine and uses more practical body systems which can actually save you money.

It was the only vehicle which could meet such a wide variety of specification requirements; now it can meet even more. It comes in a choice of three lengths, two widths and takes a host of new DiPTAC features on board. It has wider doors and can carry even more passengers.

1500 MetroRiders are already in service, with over 250 million miles behind them. To catch up with the new, refined version, why not call us now?

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Tel. 0113 264 5182 Fax. 0113 260 6635

▼ Bus

FirstBus deal fear

STRATHCLYDE Passenger Transport Authority is to ask the Office of Fair Trading to refer the £100 million FirstBus bid for SB Holdings to the Monopolies and Mergers Commission.

The recommendation has been made by the SPTA following its full meeting on 7 June. "If the MMC allows it, there are certain conditions we would like to be imposed — particularly with regard to not withdrawing services," SPTA chairman Charles Gordon told *CBW*.

Authority members were concerned that, if FirstBus acquired a 66 per cent market share in greater Glasgow, it could make service cuts that would seriously affect the SPTA's already tight budget, he said. Assurances are also being sought FirstBus would co-operate with the SPTA, and that the operator would consult with the authority before introducing fare increases.

At the same meeting, the SPTA failed to convince representatives from its 12- member unitary councils to release part of their capital allocations to the authority.

Mr Gordon has lambasted as "discrimination" the decision to route 75 per cent of SPTA's £6 million borrowing requirement through the dozen authorities, while English PTAs enjoy dedicated borrowing consent.

Meanwhile, almost 3,500 employee shareholders in SB Holdings have voted unanimously in favour of the takeover.

▼ Awards

Where to stay in Bournemouth

Special packages for 1996/7 Coach Industry Awards

By Mike Morgan

THIS year's *CBW* Coach Industry Awards is the biggest event in the coaching calendar. It's the event you can't afford to miss and the launch last week gave full details of the categories and how to enter (*CBW*, 8 June).

If the number of phone calls to the *CBW* office over the last few days is anything to go by, it is already clear there's going to be heavy demand for table space at the Purbeck Hall in Bournemouth on Awards night, 23 November 1996.

Although bookings for the gala dinner are not being taken at this stage — look out for the booking form which will be inside *CBW* in the near future — Bournemouth Tourism has already allocated hotel accommodation and special packages are available now.

As promised we give you full details of those hotels offering special deals in this week's *CBW* so you can start to plan your Awards weekend.

Remember, the hotels must be contacted directly. There's plenty of room in the Purbeck Hall and bookings for the Gala Dinner will be handled by *CBW*— later.

These are your hotels:

● **Belvedere Hotel**
Bath Road
Bournemouth
BH1 2EU
Contact Ref: CIA
Tel: 01202 297556
62 rooms allocated
4 crowns
Highly Commended
AA/RAC 3 Star
£25 per night B&B no single supplement Friday/ Saturday nights

● **Chesterwood Hotel**
East Overcliff Drive
Bournemouth
BH1 3AR
Contact: Kamal Somaiya
Tel: 01202 558057
25 rooms allocated
4 crowns
Commended
AA/RAC 3 star
£25 p.p.p.nt. B&B no single supplement Friday/Saturday nights

● **Durley Hall Hotel**
Durley Chine Road
Bournemouth
BH2 5JS
Contact: Adele Edwards
Tel: 01202 751000
30 rooms allocated
ETB 4 crowns
Highly Commended
AA/RAC 3 star
£25 p.p.p.nt B&B. No single room, supplement. Friday/Saturday nights.

Book tables with *CBW* but your hotel direct

● **Marsham Court Hotel**
Russell-Cotes Road
Bournemouth
BH1 3AB
Contact: Sue Johnson
Tel: 01202 552111
30 rooms allocated
ETB 4 crowns Commended
AA/RAC 3 star
£25 p.p.p.nt B&B. £5 single-room supplement. Saturday night only.

● **Stakis Bournemouth Hotel**
Westover Road
Bournemouth
BH1 2BZ
Contact: Sue King
Tel: 01202 557681
30 rooms allocated
AA 4 star
£30 p.p.p.nt B&B £14 extra per nt. Single rooms supplement. Friday/Saturday nights.

● **Winter Gardens Hotel**
Tregonwell Road
Bournemouth
BH2 5NU
Contact: Alison or Lorraine
Tel: 01202 555769
30 rooms allocated
£15 p.p.p.nt B&B. No single-room supplement. Friday/Saturday nights

Familiarisation visits by coach of Dorset and the New Forest are planned for the Saturday morning, co-ordinated by Bournemouth Tourism.

Saturday night transfer coach to and from Purbeck Hall from these hotels, courtesy of Bournemouth Tourism and Excelsior Coaches.

Accommodation unbooked will be released back to hotels on Friday 4 October 1996. Further assistance with booking accommodation is available from Paul Buck at Bournemouth Tourism on Tel: 01202 451718. Fax: 01202 451743.

COACH AND BUS WEEK
COACH INDUSTRY AWARDS 1996/7
IN ASSOCIATION WITH THE COACH TOURISM COUNCIL

▼ Bus

Couple beat up driver who wasn't going their way

A WEST Midlands Travel driver was badly beaten by a couple — because he wasn't going in their direction.

Parshan Singh, 62, had arrived with his 541 service at Fisher Street station in Dudley after a journey from Wolverhampton.

The couple, a man and a woman, were expecting the service to go onto Merry Hill but that particular service terminates at 4.45 pm.

When Mr Singh told them he was not going there they butted him and punched him in the face.

He was left badly cut and bruised.

West Midlands Travel spokesman Phil Bateman told reporters: "We find this violent attack abhorrent and we will do everything we can with the police to see these people are caught. There is no excuse for this loutish behaviour."

Low Floor Bus Experience

WRIGHTS

1993 ✓
1994 ✓
1995 ✓
1996 ✓

✓ **WRIGHTS PIONEERED THE UK BUILT LOW FLOOR BUS.** We have been producing and selling them since **1993**. We are the most experienced supplier to the UK market and so far **25 Operating Fleets have bought, tested and approved these products** - *IN SERVICE WHERE IT MATTERS!*

✓ **WRIGHTS LOW FLOOR BUSES MAKE EXTRA PROFITS.** Results from operators using WRIGHTS buses on selected routes suggest that a bus fleet of 50 could generate an extra £250K to £400K more a year than their conventional counterparts.

✓ **LOW FLOOR BUS SAFETY AND DURABILITY DEPENDS ON THE STRUCTURAL INTEGRITY OF THE BODY.** WRIGHTS very strong bolted aluminium system is superbly suited to low floor buses. In fact, we have been using this safe, long lasting system for all our products since the 1970's, with outstanding success.

✓ **WRIGHTS OFFER THE LARGEST RANGE OF PROVEN LOW FLOOR BUSES IN THE UK** - 6 models from 9m to 12m lengths on VOLVO, DENNIS and SCANIA chassis.

The Wright Way Forward

✓ *9 in every 10 British made Low Floor 12m buses in UK service are WRIGHTS' BUSES.*

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WRIGHT

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One more step inside

Wheelarches changed

▼ Coach

Marcopolo revamped

Changes inside and out

By Mark Barton

IMPORTING dealer Alf Moseley Continental of Loughborough has revamped its Portuguese-bodied Dennis Javelin for the UK. Outwardly, the new Marcopolo looks cleaner thanks to an effective tidy up that includes reshaped wheel arches. Changes inside the vehicle include an additional step, new Fainsa seats and a completely new forced-air ventilation system. Moquette trimming inside is now exclusively through Holdsworth. Glass roof vents replace the rather gloomy solid-coloured units fitted in earlier vehicles, luggage racks are now fully trimmed and the driver benefits from a redesigned dash including storage facilities. Starting price for UK-specified vehicles is £124,500 for a 53 seater rising to £134,000 for a 49 seater with toilet and superior Fainsa America seats with folding table, ashtray, magazine rack and footrest to the rear. Sales manager John Dunn expects to sell 50 of the new Marcopolos this year.

Outwardly, the new Marcopolo looks cleaner

Driver benefits from a new dash

New Fainsa seats and moquette

WHO SAYS FLEET MAINTENANCE IS AN EXACT* SCIENCE?

Britain's biggest bus company amongst others that today include train and light railway operators. The reason? **FACT** - **F**leet **A**ctivity **C**ontrol **T**echnology software was written by engineers with engineers in mind. As a result, the system works for the engineer, advising him, prompting him and above all, saving him time and money.

There are no strings, no special offers, no long-term clauses behind **FACT.** There are however, free demonstrations, and endless successful case studies. We simply require a call from you, to let us know you too regard fleet maintenance as an exact science.

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SHEFFIELD S30 4PH FAX 0114 257 1609

* In February this year Stagecoach plc ordered FACT to be supplied to all their UK garages

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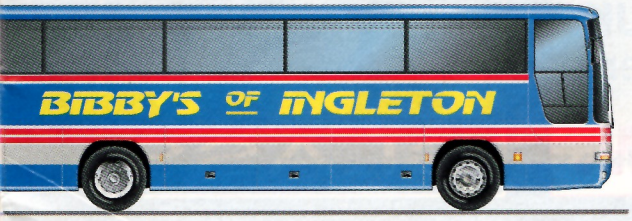

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▼ Bus

Liberator: less weight more seats

Plus fuel consumption better — claim

By Mark Barton

WRIGHT'S new fully-accessible Liberator is the lightest and highest-capacity bus based on Volvo's premium B10L lowfloor chassis, according to the fast-growing Northern Ireland bodybuilder.

Fuel consumption is claimed to be better than its nearest competitor and it accommodates up to 47 seated and over 20 standing passengers. There is also space for pushchairs and up to two passengers in wheelchairs.

Wrights describes its latest product as another member in the family of buses it has built to cover a range of operational applications within the UK bus industry. Stylistically the Liberator is very similar to the Wrights Pathfinder (Dennis SLF), Crusader (Volvo B6LE) and Scania Axcessultralow. The front and rear ends are almost identical, for example. But the similarities are more than skin deep.

Construction is by the same Alusuisse-bolted aluminium method and many parts are common across the range to allow operators to keep parts stock to an economic minimum. However, if accident damage does put a Wrights bus off the road, parts will be dispatched from Ireland to arrive within 24 hours thanks to a fully-staffed parts response department.

"No bus has ever had so much development time and design time lavished upon it," said Wrights design director Trevor Erskine at Liberator's launch in Manchester last week. "We have retained all of the benefits of the B10L's virtually step-free interior and have combined this with features that enhance the passenger friendliness of the B10L."

Its 320mm entrance kneels to 230mm at stops and, on the five bought by FirstBus for its Greater Manchester Superbus routes, a retractable ramp provides a seamless entrance from pavement to vehicle for disabled passengers or mothers with pushchairs.

Although Wrights describes the vehicle as "totally low floor," Liberator's floor is only completely flat up until the rear drive axle. The B10L's offside fuel tank has been relocated ahead of the rear wheels, opposite the air tanks.

This has reduced the height of the wheelarches and the roomy luggage pens fitted above them. Combined with the space saving effect of Volvo's Independent Front Suspension (IFS) units it has also created room for an additional inward-facing seat directly behind the driver's cab.

The straight gangway then leads into a rectangular bay, which, on the Manchester vehicles, is provided with guide rails and four pairs of tip-up seats. When the seats are raised (their normal position) the open space can comfortably accommodate wheelchairs and/or pushchairs. This layout is neat and attractive but it is the only true low-floor area within the vehicle. Just ahead of the rear axle, the floor slopes up by around five degrees to a step which leads on to a second, short platform. There is another step from there to the five rearmost seats.

Wrights and Volvo stress this design allows for the fitting of a second door to provide a true fully-accessible bus. But, given the price being quoted for Liberator is around £107,000, operators might well be looking for a more significant advantages from the one-door variant.

Mind you, that money does buy one of the more sophisticated single-deck buses on the market. The quality of build now being achieved at Ballymena is very high. On the road this means a very quiet and conspicuously rattle and vibration-free ride — enhanced on the Manchester vehicles by double glazing — which is nearer to that of a coach than a bus. In the fight for passengers used to car comfort, that can be a powerful weapon.

Designer Trevor Erskine has also thought of the driver's comfort. The cab is ergonomically designed with a fully adjustable Chapman seat. A typically neat touch is the small red light fitted at the rear of the body on both sides. Wright's research has shown bonded glazing looks good, but reflects the surrounding buildings to such an extent it can confuse the driver. The small light, which comes on automatically when the engine is started and only shines forward, provides a useful indicator of where the end of the vehicle is.

It all adds up to an attractive addition to an already successful range. CBW

Easy access: Greater Manchester has the first Liberator

New vehicle off to flying start

TO date Wrights has had ordered or delivered 250 lowfloor buses in the UK and Liberator has got off to a flying start. West Midlands Travel has changed its order of 150 B10Bs to include 100 Liberator B10Ls. They will go into build later this year. WMT also has an option to buy a further 150 after that - all on Volvo B10L chassis.

As if that wasn't enough, WMT has placed another order for 50 B6LE Crusaders.

FirstBus-owned Greater Manchester, however, will be the first British operator to run Liberators. It has ordered five for its Superbus route between Wigan and Leigh. They are double glazed and conform to Greater Manchester PTE specification with 42 seats, four pairs of face-to-face tip-up seats behind the front wheels and two pairs of DPTAC priority seats directly behind them.

Volvo, Wrights, and Greater Manchester celebrate launch

▼ Bus

Clydeside: one-year routes ban

Failed to run local services as registered

Company warned by the Scottish traffic commissioner

By Michael Jewell

FAILURE to operate local services in accordance with their registered particulars has led to Clydeside Buses being banned from operating its route 37 and any further services between Spateston and Paisley for a year.

In addition, Scottish traffic commissioner Michael Betts has required the company to re-register a service between Paisley and Kilbarchan into its three component parts.

The company, of The Gatehouse, Porterfield Road, Renfrew, appeared before the commissioner at a Glasgow disciplinary inquiry.

In deciding not to take any action over failures to operate a service between Gourock and Trumpethill because of a serious shortage of drivers at the Greenock depot, Mr Betts warned Clydeside that it either operated local services in accordance with their registered particulars, and in accordance with the regulations, or it got out of local service operation.

Describing the company's actions as naive, even arrogant, Mr Betts warned that further breaches could lead to an order that the company repay 20 per cent of the fuel duty rebate grant received in the preceding three months.

Managing director Graham Torrance told the inquiry the company had always considered the operation of route 37, which was made up of parts of two registered services, to be legal.

It was the designation for additional journeys on the Paisley to Kilbarchan service, between Paisley and Johnstone which then continued within Johnstone under the registration of a Johnstone circular service. He agreed it did not proceed to the terminal point of the Johnstone circular service.

The commissioner pointed out that a service had to have a starting point, a finishing point and principal intermediate points.

Route 37 was only part running and, therefore, must be a "duplicate" which, under the current regulations, had to be justified by passenger demand at that time. Whenever bus monitors had travelled on the service, only minimal use was being made of it.

Mr Betts said it was clear route 37 had failed to operate in accordance with the registered particulars, having only run over part of the route. It had also operated as an unauthorised local service as it had run as a through route. It also failed to meet the requirements in respect of duplication.

● **Full report of hearing and commissioner's decision will appear in legal news in a future issue of *CBW***

▼ Light Rail

Tram plan scuppered

PROPOSALS for a £150 million to £170 million tram system in Glasgow have been dealt a fatal blow by Parliamentary Commissioners at the end of a nine-week inquiry. The commissioners unanimously agreed the scheme should not proceed, invoking their legal right to give no reason for the decision.

The project would have entailed a tram system linking Maryhill in north Glasgow to the city centre, and on to Easterhouse in the east. Strathclyde PTA argued it would have reduced noise and exhaust pollution, while aiding social regeneration.

Objectors included Strathclyde Buses, which claimed the scheme would have entailed excessive and unnecessary expense.

▼ Bus

Park and ride: more sites for York

YORK City Council's intention to build three more park-and-ride sites around the city was confirmed last week during an official visit of Transport Secretary Sir George Young to the Grimston Bar site — taken over by FirstBus subsidiary Rider York last October

The company took over the management, staffing and operation of two park-and-ride facilities in the city and introduced 14 new low-floor Scania L113 single deckers to operate the services at £1 return per passenger.

A third site at Clifton Moor goes live daily this Summer and a further six buses are being purchased for the service, which currently operates on Saturdays and during school holidays only.

Patronage at Grimston Bar has increased to 170,000 passengers in its first year as the city-wide total rose from 595,000 in 1994 to 734,000 in 1995. The Clifton Moor site, which will be fully open in July, will add a further 1,000 parking spaces to the 1,470 at the other two facilities.

Councillor Dave Merrett, chairman of the unitary authority's planning and transportation committee, said three more facilities were envisaged for opening early in the 21st century and that park and ride was an absolutely fundamental part of the city's transport strategy.

Sir George Young said he was very interested in the way York had approached the transport challenge in the city.

Sir George Young and Coun Dave Merrett at Grimston Bar

● See Diary - page 25

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▼ Licensing

Claribel is 'absolutely' brilliant' says Pugh

CLARIBEL Coaches was described as "absolutely brilliant" by West Midland traffic commissioner John Mervyn Pugh. The commissioner increased the company's O-licence authorisation.

Claribel, of 10 Fortnum Close, Tile Cross, Birmingham, had applied to increase its authorisation from four minibuses and 14 single deckers to four minibuses and 21 single deckers at a Birmingham public inquiry.

Managing director David Watkiss said he thought they had carried out everything they had been instructed to do and the recommended system was working very well.

Mr Pugh said that, to see Claribel have a satisfactory maintenance report, to find that no prohibition notices had been issued, and that the company was doing everything it could do, was really tremendous. If only every operator who was in trouble listened to the advice as Mr Watkiss had done. The company had come very close to the revocation of its licence in the past.

In reply to the commissioner, Mr Watkiss said the company had already acquired the seven additional vehicles, G-registered Optares from Walls of Manchester. They were respraying them in their own livery and they would be put through fresh MoT tests before being put on the road — hopefully by the end of June.

Granting the application, Mr Pugh said he really was delighted. "It was like a ray of sunshine."

▼ Maintenance

Primrose given find

Commissioner blames 'weak management' for com

by Michael Jewell

BAD management and a failure to change with the times were the reasons for Primrose Motor Services (Leominster) receiving a "final severe warning" during its second appearance at disciplinary proceedings in five months.

The company, of Worcester Road, Hereford, holds a 16-vehicle O-licence. It appeared before West Midland traffic commissioner John Mervyn Pugh in January because of concerns over maintenance, receiving a warning and having its application to increase the licence authorisation refused.

For Primrose, Michael Carless said there had been three relatively minor prohibitions since. In a check at Hereford Bus Station a vehicle was found with an inoperative emergency door buzzer.

Mr Carless said the second had arisen after a complaint from a member of the public about the conduct of a driver, and the driver then complained about the vehicle. The commissioner replied that, at the last public inquiry, he had been concerned with complaints from the public.

Mr Carless said that, on this occasion, the driver was probably travelling too fast as he approached the rear of the vehicle in front and had to swerve to avoid it. He then complained about the brakes. When the vehicle was examined, there was no problem with the brakes but a prohibition was issued for other defects.

The third prohibition was issued during a school bus check for two comparatively minor defects. A fleet inspection was carried out as a consequence. Three vehicles were inspected and no faults were found.

Before the fleet inspection took place director Nigel Yeomans was so concerned that he had started putting the company's vehicles through fresh MoT tests to see if there was a problem with the maintenance staff, one of the prohibitions having been varied when two further defects were found when the vehicle was produced for clearance.

The fitter concerned had been dismissed. Another fitter inherited from Bengrys had also gone and three new fitters had been employed. Of those, one had already undertaken a VI course and the other two would do so in the near future.

The senior fitter from the associated Yeomans Canyon Travel was coming in to oversee the maintenance. The driver subject to the complaint had also been dismissed. All the company's vehicles had gone through the MoT test on first presentation.

Mark Corrick, the company's general manager, said letters had been sent to the company's drivers and fitters, pointing out their responsibilities. However, he had been unable to get the fitters to sign them.

Mr Pugh said he should have dismissed them in that case but Mr Corrick said he had relied upon the head man, who had been with the company for 15 years. He had

▼ Licensing

No Knotty problem

KNOTTY Bus & Coach has had its 11-vehicle O-licence renewed at a Birmingham public inquiry.

Partners Martin and Sandra Hearson, trading as Knotty Bus & Coach, of Unit C, Parkhouse Industrial Estate East, Chesterton, Newcastle under Lyme, Staffordshire, appeared before West Midland traffic commissioner John Mervyn Pugh.

The commissioner said the firm had previously been in difficulty over maintenance. However, it had taken on board the recommended maintenance system. Though the vehicle examiner's report was marked unsatisfactory, he agreed with Mr Hearson it was not hitting at the maintenance as such but at the inspection pit. There had also been a minor error in that some inspection sheets had not been signed off.

Mr Hearson said they had introduced new-type sheets and there were one or two which he had failed to sign as supervisor.

Mr Pugh said it seemed the complaint was there was not much room in the workshop for turning vehicles round. Mr Hearson admitted the inspection pit was not the most admirable of pits.

They had plans to construct a new one outside during the Summer and then roof it over, before improving the existing pit. Since the last public inquiry they had received only one prohibition notice and that was due to a broken spring leaf.

Mr Pugh said he was not concerned about that as he did not consider it to be maintenance related. It had not been marked as showing a significant maintenance failure at all.

Renewing the licence, Mr Pugh said: "Keep up the system, you know it works."

Commissioner said recomme

l warning

pany's shortfalls

given the mechanic who was at fault on the last occasion another chance. With hindsight, he should have dismissed him.

Mr Pugh said the company was now back before him with a string of prohibitions caused by the same fitter. There were a whole lot of small defects, all of which should have been reported by the drivers and rectified by the mechanics.

Mr Corrick said not all the drivers had handed in defect reports but Mr Pugh said that again was weak management.

Mr Corrick said he now went in at 6 am to see that the drivers checked their vehicles before taking them out. He had previously taken the word of the chief mechanic and he had thought everything was on course. He had taken him at his word as he was more experienced.

Mr Pugh said Mr Corrick must have been suspicious when he refused to sign the letter. Mr Corrick replied that the chief mechanic had all sorts of reasons. He had said that, as he was self-employed, he had not seen why he should. He read the letter but it never got signed. He had not refused point blank. Mr Bengry, who had been there previously, had thought highly of the person concerned and they had never had a problem.

Nothing major had been found on the vehicles that were inspected.

Mr Pugh said he thought the finger of blame lay fully with Mr Corrick and, if he did not accept advice after the present hearing, he was going to cost Mr Yeomans his business.

ded maintenance system had been taken on board

▼ Maintenance

Avondale coach had five loose wheelnuts

FIVE out of six wheelnuts on one wheel on an Avondale Coaches vehicle were found to be loose during a maintenance investigation in February.

This and other failures in maintenance standards led to the company being given a formal warning by Scottish traffic commissioner Michael Betts at a Glasgow disciplinary inquiry.

Christopher Irving and Thomas McIntyre, trading as Avondale Coaches, of 52 Finnart Street, Greenock, hold a 16-vehicle O-licence.

DoT vehicle examiner Matt Kelly said that, when the licence was granted in 1994, it was said inspections would be carried out by Avondale's own staff every four weeks or 7,000 kilometres.

The firm had been sent a warning letter about maintenance in February 1995. In July 1995 two vehicles were issued with immediate prohibitions, endorsed as showing significant maintenance failures, at separate roadside checks.

A metal bracket which had been fitted round a window on the first vehicle was left with jagged edges. That was potentially dangerous to passengers and would have been clearly visible to a driver carrying out a daily check. On the second vehicle a seat mount had been displaced and the seat back was detached.

In addition, two out of six wheelnuts were loose on one wheel, with rust visible. The driver had been advised to keep driving while a replacement vehicle was sent out. The vehicle examiner had reported there was evidence of relative movement as a consequence of the loose wheelnuts. A maintenance investigation the following day revealed the period between inspections had been extended up to seven weeks. As a result, a further warning letter was sent.

He wondered why management was not available in the morning to ensure drivers carried out their daily checks, saying he thought there was a need for more elementary standards to be enforced

At a maintenance investigation in February a vehicle was issued with an immediate prohibition endorsed 'S', after five out of six wheelnuts were found to be loose on one wheel, with three clear gaps visible.

For the firm, David Gold said the jagged edges on the metal bracket on the coach in July 1995 were the result of the metal not being finished off properly due to a lack of experience on the part of the fitter concerned.

They had thought it was better to maintain passenger satisfaction by keeping the second bus prohibited in July in service. The passengers had been warned to keep clear of the defective seats rather than withdraw the bus from service.

The damage to the seats was due to vandalism on an earlier journey when the vehicle had carried schoolchildren. It was challenged that there was relative movement as a result of the loose wheelnuts. Four of the wheelnuts had been fully secure.

Steps had been taken to ensure drivers were aware of their responsibilities in regard to the reporting of defects. In addition, a mechanic would now check each vehicle each night and two quality control inspections would be undertaken each month. The firm had recently been approved as a test station for cars and vans, and that had raised the awareness of the need for high standards among their maintenance staff.

The age profile of the fleet was being improved. Two new vehicles had recently been acquired with another two due to be delivered shortly. Eleven vehicles were used on three registered services, with the other five employed on school contracts.

Mr Betts emphasised the necessity of training drivers in what to look for when reporting defects, and for disciplinary action to be taken against those who did not respond accordingly. He wondered why management was not available in the morning to ensure drivers carried out their daily checks, saying he thought there was a need for more elementary standards to be enforced.

Mr Betts indicated that, before continuous licensing, he might well have curtailed the licence duration. However, he no longer had that power. Notwithstanding that, there would be a reappraisal in the coming year. If the promises made had not been fulfilled he would have to take very serious action.

▼ Europe

Pushing the coach out

P&O offers Paris and Normandy programme

by William Golden

DAY trips to Paris and lunch breaks in Normandy feature in a new programme of coach trips from P&O European Ferries.

A day in Paris costs just £29 per person and includes a full guided city tour and return overnight ferry crossing, with a cabin berth. For the same price, visitors can opt for a tour of the Normandy towns of Honfleur and Lisieux, which includes a visit to the Boulard Calvados distillery.

Also on the menu is a visit to Caen for £37 per person. This includes a three-course lunch, with wine, at the Hotel la Savoy and a visit to Bayeux to see the tapestry and cathedral. Other tour destinations are Monet's Garden, Fecamp and Rouen.

All trips leave from Portsmouth and travel is on one of P&O's AA 5-star rated cruiseferries. There are numerous pick-up points in Hampshire, West Sussex and Dorset and the tours run each week until mid-December.

● Eurolink Ferries, which operates a service from Sheerness to Vlissingen, has celebrated its first birthday by reporting a marked increase in bookings.

The service started with one ship in April last year and added a second in July. Its total carryings in 1995 were 75,000 but, this year, bookings had topped 120,000 by the end of May - an increase of 60 per cent.

Laraine Soliman, Eurolink's general manager, said: "We started 1996 with record bookings and that trend has continued. We are particularly pleased with new business from the north east on the UK side, and from Germany and Belgium through Vlissingen.

"The route is also proving popular with travellers from the Far East flying into London and Amsterdam. Recent groups using our service have included parties from Malaysia and Korea."

Team spirit: the new sales and marketing line-up at North Sea Ferries is (from left) David Townend, Martin Slater, Tony Farrell, Jim Pybus and Gordon Borrill

...across North Sea

NORTH SEA Ferries, the Hull-based operator, has announced a change of course in its sales and marketing line-up, with the promotion of David Townend, Martin Slater and Gordon Borrill to key account managers. Mr Townend will handle all retail travel accounts, while Mr Slater and Mr Borrill will be responsible for the group travel market.

Jim Pybus, the company's PR manager in the UK, will also take responsibility for tour operators' accounts.

Tony Farrell, UK passenger sales and marketing manager, said: "With the new line-up, I am confident we will be able to react more swiftly to the changing market and provide our clients with an even better service."

▼ UK

The selling of Scotland

A MAJOR review of its customer assurance scheme for accommodation and visitor attractions is being carried out by the Scottish Tourist Board this Summer. It will encompass consultation all sectors of the trade in a bid to ensure that the scheme was evolving along with customer expectations.

Derek Reid, the tourist board's chief executive, said that, after 11 years and with nearly 7,000 businesses as members, the scheme had played a leading role in improving the quality of accommodation and hospitality in Scotland.

He added: "However, it is not perfect and it needs to evolve as customer expectations and standards are raised. It is clear there are two issues we need to address.

"The first is that many people have difficulty, at first glance, in understanding the difference between grading and classification. Consequently, they may find themselves in accommodation that is not of the standard they had hoped for.

"Secondly, should we continue to give any award to an establishment where the term 'quality' may be misleading and where an STB endorsement may be seen as inappropriate?"

The results of the review will be published in October and implemented alongside a UK-wide review being undertaken by the tourist boards of England and Wales.

CBW

▼ UK

Nat Ex in Metro deal

FREE travel on all local Metro train services in Newcastle-upon-Tyne is available to National Express passengers, following a deal between the UK coach operator and Newcastle's PTE.

The link-up enables National Express ticket holders to travel free to the St James Metro station, the nearest to the Gallowgate coach station in Newcastle, any time from now up to 27 October.

Kevin Bennett, director of marketing for National Express, said: "This is not only good news for our passengers, but for all our local agents as well. Free travel on the Metro system is a real selling point. We already offer local people free bus travel in other UK cities, but this is our first deal with a local Metro operator.

"I feel sure that encouraging people to use a combination of public transport options, linked together seamlessly in this way, is very much the way ahead. Wherever we can, we plan to make such facilities available elsewhere in the country."

Andy Bairstow, commercial and marketing director for the Metro, said: "This deal will run for a six-month trial during which we will monitor sales closely, but I am sure it will prove to be an effective marketing device for both companies."

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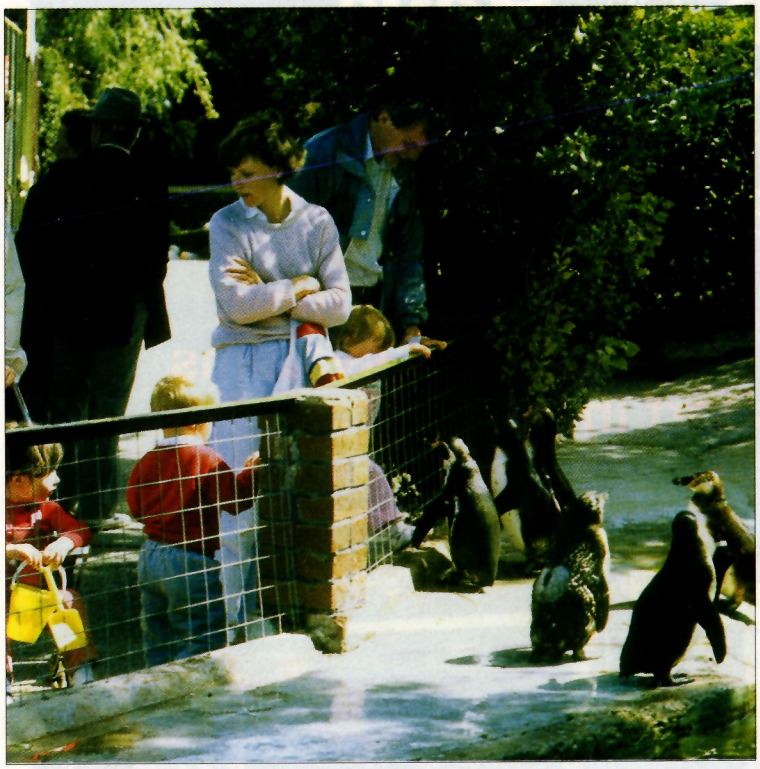

Bird happy: the penguin breeding programme is one of the many success stories at Southport Zoo

▼UK

Port attracts both north and south

by William Golden

MORE coach groups are being attracted to Southport this season as tourism officials in the Lancashire resort target operators through an intensive marketing campaign.

Hostesses will greet groups on arrival and provide welcome packs for each group member. Drivers will be given details of coach parking and pick-up facilities. Many of the resort's hotels offer free places for drivers and those who visit regularly receive stamps which may be redeemed for vouchers.

Southport has seen a multi-million pound development of its shopping centre in the past decade and all the big High Street names are represented in the two main shopping areas - Marble Place and Lord Street, while the Victorian-style Cambridge Walks is home to boutiques and pavement cafes.

Away from the shops, Southport has a full Summer programme of events, which includes the famous flower show, a five-day festival of clowning, an air show and the long-running pier festival.

One of the other attractions is Southport Zoo, where work is nearing completion on an £11,000 refurbishment programme. The mandrill baboon enclosure is being expanded and renovations are being made to the tropical house.

▼UK

Newcomers welcome at CTC Pleasure Day

OPERATORS can build bridges with customers by making sure they attend this year's Coach Tourism Council's Coaching For Pleasure Day at Legoland on Monday 16 September.

They are being invited to bring a coach of group organisers for a free day out at the attraction, near Windsor, and enjoy the activity areas, shows, restaurants and shops. One of the features is Miniland, where detailed scenes from European capitals have been constructed using thousands of Lego bricks.

In addition to free entry, group organisers will be given £5 of Lego Loot exchangeable at any of the park's four restaurants.

This will be the seventh annual Coaching For Pleasure Day and will raise money for the CTC's new charity, Cancer Relief Macmillan Fund. An auction will be held during the day, with lots ranging from celebrity items to holidays.

CTC chairman Chris Wales said: "It is very exciting for us to be able to help operators to introduce group organisers to a new venue through our Coaching For Pleasure Day.

"This will be the first time we have targeted operators involved with younger groups and we hope to welcome many newcomers to the event."

● Operators wanting to attend should contact the CTC secretary, Derrick Alsop, on telefax 0115 973 2260.

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City	Average temperature last week	City	Average temperature last week
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Athens	29C/84F	Oslo	17F/63F
Berlin	23C/73F	Paris	27C/81F
Brussels	25C/77F	Rome	25C/77F
Dublin	16C/61F	Stockholm	20C/68F
Lisbon	27C/81F	Vienna	21C/70F
Luxembourg	25C/77F	Zurich	21C/70F

DIESEL PRICES

(Courtesy AA Roadwatch)

Country	Diesel price per litre in Sterling	Country	Diesel price per litre in Sterling
Austria	0.57	Luxembourg	0.44
Belgium	0.53	Netherlands	0.53
Eire	0.58	Norway	0.74
France	0.53	Portugal	0.47
Germany	0.52	Spain	0.47
Greece	0.43	Sweden	0.63
Italy	0.61	Switzerland	0.69

HOLIDAY POUND

Country	Currency exchange rate	Country	Currency exchange rate
Austria	16.17 Sch/£	Italy	2,346 Lire/£
Belgium	47.22BFr/£	Netherlands	2.5775 Gld/£
Denmark	8.92 K/£	Norway	9.88 NKr/£
Eire	0.95 Punt/£	Portugal	238.25 Es/£
France	7.650 F/£	Spain	194 Pta/£
Germany	2.30 DM/£	Sweden	10.2050 SKr/£
Greece	366 D/£	Switzerland	1.88 SFr/£

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DENNIS JAVELIN GX	Algarve II	53 recliners	from £136,250
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92 (PP)	DAF MB230	Algarve 3.5	49 seats, toilet, power door
90 (PP)	MERCEDES 0303	Charisma	49 seats, toilet, power door
89 (F)	VOLVO B10M	Van Hool Alizee	49 seats, toilet, power door
87 (E)	BEDFORD YMP 10M	Plaxton 3200	35 seats, p/door, courier seat
86 (C)	LEYLAND TIGER	Plaxton 3500	49 seats, toilet, power door

85 (B) LEYLAND TIGER ZF Duple Caribbean
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84 (A)	LEY. R. TIGER	Doyen	46 seats, toilet, double glazed
84 (A)	DAF SB	Calypso	53 seats, power door
84 (A)	BEDFORD YNT	Contour	53 seats, power door
84 (A)	DAF SB	Jonckheere P50	49, rec, toilet, power door
84 (PP)	DAF SB	Futura FHD	49 seats, toilet, power door
82 (X)	FORD R1114	Plaxton	53 seats, power door

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MINI BUS SELECTION

93 (K)	TOYOTA	Optimo II	21 seats, power door
92 (K)	TOYOTA	Optimo II	21 seats, power door
91 (J)	TOYOTA	Optimo II	18 seats, power door
88 (F)	VW LT 55	Optare City Pacer	23 seats, power door

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Questions & Answers

When is coach a bus?

Q **In answer to a question (*CBW*, 18 May) you used the words "by virtue of its construction a top speed ...etc" in relation to the definition of a 'coach' for seat-belt regulation purposes. The only definition I can find is in the Road Vehicles (Construction and Use) (Amendment) (No.2) Regulations 1987 which states "coach means a large bus with a maximum speed exceeding 60 mph."**

Could you clarify this point? Inclusion of the word "construction" implies a permanent status according to the vehicle's original build, or an agreed permanent modification such as a change of drive chain. Yet an operator I know has received advice that a suitably calibrated speed limiter will suffice. The potential to re-set the limiter according to the time of year and type of passengers carried would negate the whole principle of the regulation.

GTR, Carmarthenshire

A The regulations to which you refer amend the 'parent' Road Vehicles (Construction & Use) Regulations 1986 (S.I. 1986 No. 1078). By amendment these also incorporate the recent seatbelt rules. You are absolutely correct that a coach is defined therein as a large bus with a maximum speed exceeding 60 mph.

What you, and perhaps others, have missed is that regulation 3 defines maximum speed as: "the speed which a vehicle is incapable, by reason of its construction, of exceeding on the level under its own power when fully laden."

Having explained how the word "constructed" comes in to this definition, I do agree that an interpretation, which may yet be favoured by the police and the courts, is that this means the original construction. Regulation 3 does not, after all, say 'constructed or adapted.'

While a permanent alteration might conceivably be accepted as altering the construction, it seems to be straining the English language too far to expect 'constructed' to embrace mechanical limitation of top speed.

I, too, have heard of advice being given that speed limiter calibration can turn a coach into a bus, but doubt whether it can be relied on. Unless the minister legislates to remove this uncertainty this may well have to be decided by the courts. Some hapless operator who thinks speed limiter setting will avoid seatbelt fitment will have the dubious and expensive honour of becoming the guinea pig for the test case.

Paying-out problem

Q **When I and some of my drivers received summonses for a total of 214 alleged tachograph offences I engaged a solicitor whose track record on such matters is supreme. I believed that my legal expenses insurance policy would pay his bill.**

Although it was not in the policy the insur-

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ers put a ceiling of £75 per hour on his charges. I was not happy about this as I knew that they would be just over £200 per hour, but I had little option at that stage but to agree to foot the bill for the difference, less any costs which could be recovered from the Crown Prosecution Service.

My faith in this solicitor was well justified for, after detailed analysis of the discs involved, and discussion with the CPS, all charges were dropped and costs of £36,600 were recovered from CPS.

If the insurers now paid the agreed £75 an hour (which comes to £22,050) I would be left with a liability to pay some £7,000. But the insurers now say that, as the costs recovered from CPS are greater than the ceiling which they imposed for solicitor's fees, they will not pay anything. This leaves me with a £29,050 bill. Should I sue the insurers?

DB, Middlesex

Thanks for the supporting documents you sent. Your solicitor clearly did an excellent job for you. Had you engaged someone less experienced you might be facing a huge fine, or worse, and perhaps revocation of your O-licence.

I am not qualified to comment whether his hourly charges are right, reasonable or high. I do, however, believe that £75 an hour is low for the level of skill and knowledge involved in defending 'hours' charges. The fact that your insurers claim to only pay that amount to solicitors acting on (run-of-the-mill, production-line law) claims matters for them is not a fair or reasonable yardstick of the appropriate cost for a highly-qualified expert with an impressive track record in a particular field.

Having said that, your present solicitor's advice on whether or not to sue the insurers is unlikely to be totally unbiased. Although he is not their client he doubtless feels aggrieved by them and this may influence his recommendation. I would, therefore, advise you to consult a different solicitor on this.

The issues are complex and success uncertain. I can only offer a few thoughts. Your insurance policy does require you to seek recovery of costs and to pass them over to the insurers. This would seem, in the circumstances, to be an unfair contract term which the insurers are, in any case, not enforcing as such for, if they really thought they were in the right, they would reimburse you £22,050 (the £75 per hour rate) and insist on you giving them the £33,600 recovered from CPS.

This is so unreasonable as to be laughable but my point is that, if they are not prepared to fully enforce this clause, they cannot rely on it either to wipe out their contribution liability. I think this would be a strong point in your case.

It is not equitable or reasonable for them to have it both ways. Either they should enforce this clause, but have no cap on costs beyond the policy maximum, OR cap their fee liability and let you keep recovered costs.

Your solicitor had, in all events, advised the insurers that you only accepted their capping on the basis that it would form a contribution to the total costs to be paid or recovered.

I question your insurer's right to unilaterally restrict the policy cover by fee capping. The policy has an overall maximum claim ceiling as well as a list of exclusions and limitations. In my view any limitation on fee levels should have either been specified in the policy or a statement made that the fee structure should be approved.

It is a fundamental legal principle that contracts need clarity to be enforceable. But it might be difficult, although not impossible, to now contend that the insurers have total liability for the unrecovered part of the bill in view of the apparent acceptance by you of the cap.

While it may be possible to win (and you probably have little to lose by trying) I strongly advocate taking independent legal advice on this — not least of all because legal negotiation may yet prove more successful than litigation.

The messages from this for all operators are: use a solicitor with proven expertise in the subject, but establish beyond all doubt at the outset exactly what costs insurers will reimburse. CBW

Questions on coach and bus operation should be sent to: Marksman, c/o *Coach and Bus Week*, Wentworth House, Wentworth Street, Peterborough PE1 1DS or fax 01733 467154. Marksman will answer more questions on 29 June

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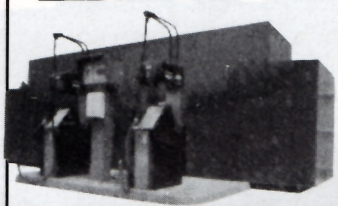

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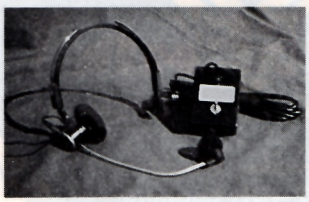

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No, Minister!

COACH and Bus Week was credited with another honour when Transport Secretary Sir George Young presented Rider York's managing director, Lorraine Goulding, with a trophy for winning the best modern vehicle class with one of her Scania low-floor park-and-ride buses.

Unfortunately, Sir George was given duff information when he named the trophy "the *CBW* cup", but perhaps it was *CBW's* northern news editor Andrew Jarosz hovering nearby that put him off. In fact, the cup was presented by the West Yorkshire Transport Museum Society and, because the society's annual rally has been moved forward a few months, the cup will not be able to gather dust at York for long.

● If you think you have a modern vehicle, registered after 1975, which can wrest the cup out of Lorraine's trophy cabinet, give WYTMS a ring on 0113 256 6505 for a rally entry form.

Jane's has the information that others don't

WHEN compiling news reports and features the *CBW* editorial team has a constant need for up-to-the-minute information.

Details of British operators and suppliers are usually well documented or available at the end of a phone line. But for more distant companies with mysterious names and locations the problem would be insurmountable if it wasn't for an invaluable publication known as Jane's.

Jane's, or Jane's Urban Transport Systems 1995/6, to be precise, is a 680-page compendium of the world's urban transport systems, manufacturers and consultants.

So, for example, when the news broke that Asquith was to import Dimo buses from Sri Lanka (*CBW*, 18 May) we needed quick answers. Who is Dimo? What do they produce?

Turn to page 507 of Jane's. "Dimo is based in Colombo, production started in 1991. It is the only assembly line in Sri Lanka. Bus bodies are currently built on Mercedes-Benz and Tata and a luxury coach is built on Mercedes-Benz OH1622 chassis. Maximum output is 50 bodies per month, but capacity is being expanded."

● Contact Jane's Information Group Ltd, Sentinel House, 163 Brighton Road, Coulsdon, Surrey CR5 2NH. Tel 0181 763 1030 or fax 0181 763 1006.

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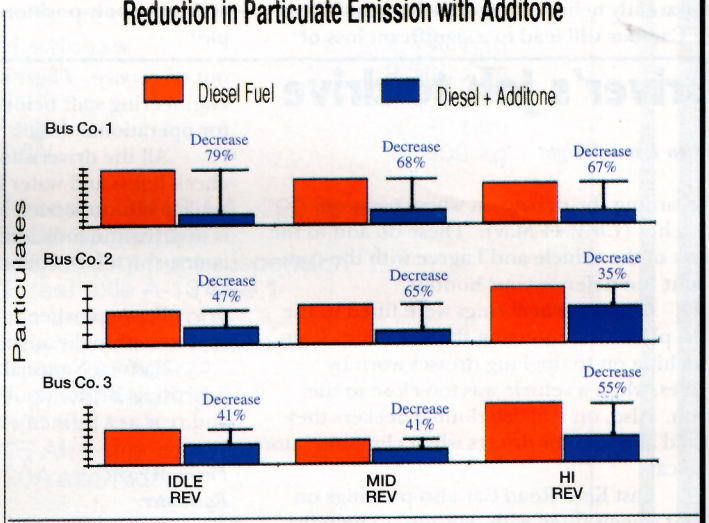

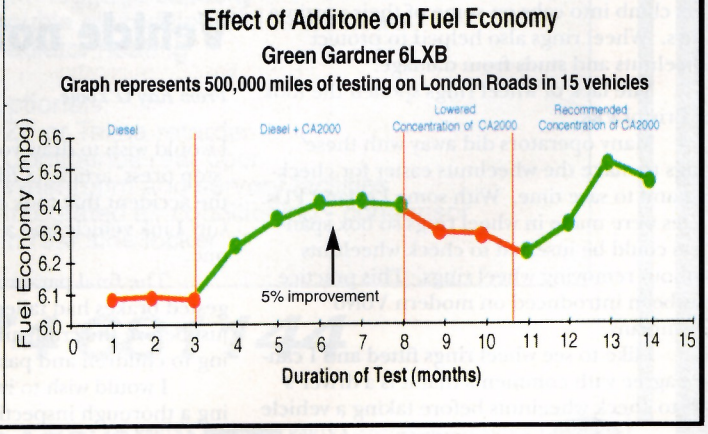

LETTER OF THE WEEK

Stagecoach probes — are they a vendetta?

From Martyn Bacon

I was very surprised and perhaps even a little disappointed to read (*CBW*, 25 May) that, if Stagecoach was to avoid reference to the MMC, it must divest Milton Keynes Citybus and the Huntingdon depot operations of United Counties following the recent purchase of the Cambus Holdings group.

As your editorial mentions, recent months have seen a succession of mergers and takeovers in the bus industry. Only the previous week, you recorded the £96 million bid from FirstBus for the 1200-bus Strathclyde and Kelvin Central companies, giving them over 20 per cent of the entire UK bus market, without so much as a murmur from the MMC and yet virtually every purchase made by the Stagecoach group is followed by orders to divest or dire warnings that fares must not be raised and services cut etc for several years to come.

The Director General of Fair Trading apparently believes Stagecoach's acquisition of Cambus will lead to a significant loss of competition or potential competition and also expects higher fares and reduced service. What evidence does he have to support any of this? My understanding of Stagecoach business practice is that it tries to enhance service levels wherever possible by generating extra business and only raise fares when no other alternative is available.

Stagecoach also tends to invest heavily in new vehicles (which in it self helps to generate passenger growth), something which management buyout and individually-owned companies have not always been so quick to do.

It is difficult not to conclude that the frequent investigations into Stagecoach acquisitions have more to do with a vendetta against the company by the MMC/OFT rather more than any genuine concerns over growth in the marketplace or business strategy. After all, when was the last time FirstBus was ordered to divest anything even though it has a larger share of the UK bus market and several monopoly positions, Bristol, for example?

If the MMC really wishes to be of service to the country, perhaps it should study why Tesco's, Sainsbury's and Safeway have come to dominate our high streets so much at the expense of older, smaller individual shops — or do these companies give too much to Conservative party funds?

Martyn Bacon
Uckfield
East Sussex

Write to: The Editor
Coach and Bus Week
EMAP Automotive Publishing
Wentworth House
Wentworth Street
Peterborough PE1 1DS
or fax 01733 467154

Keep those letters rolling in. If requested, we will publish them anonymously, but always include your full name (ie first name and surname), address and telephone number

Letter of the week wins a Corgi Classics model bus

Driver's job to drive

From Frank Wright

Regarding the debate on wheel trims on coaches (*CBW*, 11 May). These do add to the look of the vehicle and I agree with the comment "no defence your honour".

Chrome wheel rings were fitted in the first place for protecting the wheelnuts from catching on to the long dresses worn by ladies, when a vehicle was too close to the path. Also, on half-cab double deckers they acted as a step for drivers when climbing into the cab.

East Kent Road Car also put rings on front wheels fitted with 'Ferodo' to help drivers climb into cabs on some of their wartime Guys. Wheel rings also helped to protect wheelnuts and studs from damage.

The lack of wheel rings spoiled the look of Bristol VRs.

Many operators did away with these rings to make the wheelnuts easier for checking and to save time. With some Leyland PDs, holes were made in wheel rings so box spanners could be inserted to check wheelnuts without removing wheel rings. This practice has been introduced on modern Volvo Olympians.

I like to see wheel rings fitted and I cannot agree with comments that it is a driver's job to check wheelnuts before taking a vehicle out on service. These should be checked by engineering staff before the vehicle is issued for operational duties.

All the driver should have to do is to check lights and water before he takes the vehicle out on service. After all, a driver's job is to drive and look after passengers and, of course, on a bus, collect fares where necessary.

Exposed wheelnuts make a vehicle look as if something is missing, as indeed it is.

Eastern National fitted chrome 'dustbin lids' on its Bristol double-deck coaches front and rear as a refinement.

Frank Wright
Rochester
Kent

Vehicle not defective

From Ray O'Toole

I would wish to draw your attention to the 'stop press' article (*CBW*, 4 May) regarding the accident that took place between a Leeds City Link vehicle and a Keighley & District one.

The final paragraph states "reports suggested brakes had failed on the City Link bus just before the crash and driver shouted warning to children and passengers."

I would wish to inform you that, following a thorough inspection by the Department of Transport and the Police Investigation Unit, the brakes on the vehicle were reported in good working order and had passed all the relevant tests.

There were no defects found on the vehicle that would have contributed to the accident or otherwise.

Ray O'Toole
Managing director
Leeds City Link
Leeds
West Yorkshire

Not first bike shuttle

From Frank Potter

I was interested in the article 'Cyclists Shuttle' (*CBW*, 25 May) and the claim this was "Britain's first cyclists' shuttle coach service."

I don't think this is strictly the case for, when the Dartford Tunnel first opened in November 1963, London Transport ran a cyclists' shuttle service.

As I recall, the vehicles used were based on the Ford Thames Trader goods vehicle chassis with special double-deck bodies. Cycles were stowed on the "lower" deck, while the cyclists travelled upstairs.

Frank Potter
Maybole
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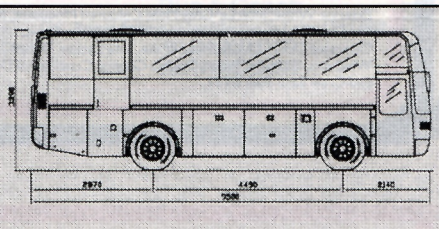
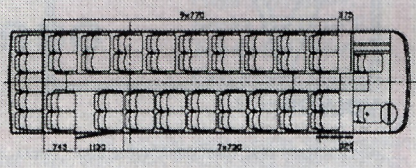
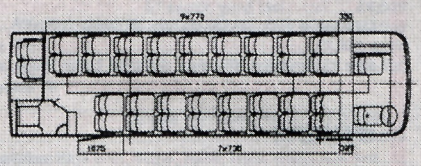




41 Labellux



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1988 VOLVO B10M JONCKHEERE P599, 51 recliners, crew seat, continental door, rear sunken toilet, double glazing, power door, fawn interior, exterior mauve/white. MoT 22/3/97 ..... ~~£69,500~~ **£66,500**

1984 VOLVO B10M PLAXTON PARAMOUNT 3500, 49 recliners, crew seat, centre demountable toilet, centre continental door, radio/tape/PA, curtains, interior brown/red, exterior white/blue, MoT 26/5/96..... ~~£34,500~~ **£29,500**

1983 VOLVO B10M CAETANO ALGARVE, rebodied 1986, 49 retrimmed recliners, crew seat, centre continental door & toilet, Clarion radio/tape, power door, interior fawn, exterior white, MoT 29/6/96..... ~~£35,000~~ **£27,500**

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1994 L Volvo B10M
Exterior White, Interio
Wheel Discs, Driver O
Locker, Sunken Toilet, D
Continental Door, Crew
Ref: 6624.

1993 L Volvo B10M
Exterior White, Blue an
Orange Moquette, Radi
Driver Operated Door,
Glazing, Tinted Windo
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1984 VOLVO B10M PLAXTON PARAMOUNT 3500, 49 recliners, courier, centre demountable toilet/continental door, radio/PA **£29,500**

1983 VOLVO B10M PLAXTON PARAMOUNT 3500, 51 reclining seats, courier, continental door, double glazing, Webasto, radio/PA **£33,500**

1983 A VOLVO B10M PLAXTON PARAMOUNT 3500, 49 reclining seats, courier seat, auto transmission, Webasto, d/glazed, boiler, fridge, wired for TV, test Aug 96... **£28,500**

1979 VOLVO B58 PLAXTON SUPREME IV, 57 seater with retractable belts, POD **£7,500**

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1992 J Volvo B10M Excalibur, 49/53 Reclining Seats, Exterior White, Interior Grey Moquette, Radio, PA, Cassette, TV, Front Wheel Discs, Driver Operated Door, ABS, Exhaust Brake, Side Locker, Toilet, Double Glazing, Tinted Windows, Blinds, Continental Door, Crew Seat, Crew Compartment and Wiring for Video. **Ref: 6735.**

1992 J Volvo B10M Premiere 320, 53 Reclining Seats, Exterior Cream and Red, Interior Duo Brown Moquette, Radio, PA, Cassette, Wheel Discs, Driver Operated Door, ABS, Telma Retarder, Side Locker, Double Glazing, Tinted Windows, Curtains, Crew Seat and 3 Piece Screen. CHOICE OF TWO (2) SIMILAR VEHICLES. **Ref: 6843.**

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r Multi Moquette, Radio, PA, Stereo,
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w Seat, Soft Trim, Air Suspension.

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nd Orange, Interior Grey, Blue and
io, PA, Cassette, Front Wheel Discs,
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Using Merc Sprinter provides a strong base ▶▶

MINIBUSES equipped with wheelchair lifts are rarely the most attractive vehicles on the road, being functional rather than beautiful. While the Bedwas Mobilis attracts more attention for its name than its looks, the Securicor-owned South Wales-based bodybuilder has used its glass fibre panels to soften the angles while retaining maximum interior capacity.

The demonstration vehicle loaned for this *CBW* Minitest was adorned in high-gloss metallic. Nevertheless, the angular bodylines of a box-van with windows could not be disguised.

Mobilis is a community passenger-carrying vehicle. Bodywork is mounted on Mercedes-Benz 412D Sprinter chas-

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sis/cowl and the customer has a range of heating, passenger lift and seating options.

The test vehicle has 16 hi-back Richards & Shaw seats and Ricon F8000 tail-lift. Tracking allows permutations when wheelchairs are carried.

Using the Merc Sprinter gives the Mobilis a strong base. Performance and driveability are top class, with slick movement through the five-speed gearbox and very responsive five-cylinder 120 bhp engine. Around town it is docile and tractable. Peak torque is delivered quickly at around 2,000 rpm, still leaving plenty of power in reserve for acceleration.

Consequently the Sprinter lives up to its name as it eats up miles on the open road. Steering has a delightful quality feel and the brakes are powerful once the driver has come to terms with the pedal's long travel.

But there's a down side. Noise levels are high when the engine is stretched beyond 3,000 rpm and the tall, wide body has a detrimental effect on ride comfort. At times body roll is alarming and width judgment difficult.

Sixteen hi-back Richards & Shaw seats

Steering has quality feel to it

As a vehicle targeting the mobility market, but with PSV applications, ride characteristics are all important, as is interior accommodation.

In this respect the Mobilis scores well. The 2.25-metre-wide body is around one third of a metre wider than a Merc van conversion, giving significant improvement for passenger elbowroom. There is a 400 mm gangway between the reasonably comfortable seats, which have Carstyle three-point belts and are narrow, firm and upright.

Headroom is generous. Overall vehicle height is 2.95 metres compared with 2.57 on the off-the-shelf high-roof 412D.

The Mobilis three-step entrance also has the passenger in mind. First step is 320 mm and the other two each measure 200 mm. A fourth, 120 mm step separates cab/entrance area from the saloon floor, which is raised to avoid intrusion from the rear wheelboxes.

Although lacking the access advantages of a low-floor bus, the Mobilis has very sensibly-positioned DPTAC handrails exactly where the mobility impaired passenger needs them, yet without disturbing the driver's line of vision.

As a welfare-type vehicle the Mobilis scores high points. Around town it is competent while being thoughtfully equipped for the purpose.

The high centre of gravity makes for a good passenger outlook through the tinted windows but at the expense of tiring bodyroll on cross-country roads. Conversely, it provides relaxing travel as it eats up long distances on good A or M roads.

Bedwas says it has had inquiries from operators for a Mobilis fitted with 20 bus seats for local service operation and, no matter what the application, they should have no fears about the base vehicle. Mercedes residuals have held up well in the past and the 18-vehicle Sprinter range is a distinct improvement on the T1 it replaced last year. The 412D is the largest and most powerful Sprinter and the one most likely to appeal to the PSV sector.

● If you're confused by the M-B model designation, 4 stands for the approximate GVW in tonnes (4,600), 12 represents the power output (122 bhp) and D signifies diesel engine. The Sprinter range includes: 208D, 308D, 212D, 312D, 412D and petrol-engined 214.

CBW

Ricon F8000 tail-lift was fitted

Sensibly-positioned handrails

SCANIA

Holiday job for Redline's ne

Operator is so impressed with his company's first K113 he is ordering two more

by Mike Morgan

REDLINE of Preston has bought its first Scania for holiday work and owner Shane Nuttall was so impressed he has gone back to the Worksop dealer and ordered two more for August delivery.

Mr Nuttall told *CBW* that, after buying Volvo for his nine-vehicle 'exec' fleet, he was now turning to Scania with a view to running equal numbers of the two marques.

Volvos to be traded in are the company's oldest coach, a former-Applebys 1989 Van Hool and two 1994 B10Ms acquired when new.

Redline was started in 1989 when Mr Nuttall set up on his own after working for his father's coach business. His first coach inspired the company name.

It was an AEC painted white with red stripes - hence Redline.

After diversifying into local bus services with Mercedes-Benz minibuses, Mr Nuttall decided to refocus on 'exec' work and now has only two Mercs for Lancashire County Council tenders.

His first 'exec' was a Duple 425 and this line of business has expanded with "a lot of holiday work and football team coaches for teams such as Blackpool FC, Bury FC and St Helens RLFC."

The Scania is a K113 with Van Hool Alizee HE bodywork with 49 seats, demountable toilet, video, drinks machine, and double glazing. It joins the Redline fleet that now totals 14.

KIRKBY

Air-con 'way forward'

EDDIE Brown Tours of Helperby, near York, has added two more Plaxton Premieres to its 14-strong coach fleet. They are based on Volvo B10M chassis and were supplied by Kirkby Coach & Bus.

"We bought our first two Premieres from Kirkby last year after running mainly imported bodies for 12 years," said director Philip Brown, "and were very happy with the way they performed.

"We handle a lot of incoming tourists in the York area and they demand very high standards. Our new coaches have air-conditioning and seatbelts — I see air-conditioning as the way forward. Ultimately we aim to be operating a fleet in which all the coaches are air-conditioned."

The company was founded in 1949 with one vehicle and now runs 14 high-quality coaches, as well as having a small but expanding contract fleet to cover school operations.

KÄSSBOHRER

'Europa Bus' has a European look

SKINNERS, the Oxted-based family-run coach operator, established for 28 years, has taken delivery of a new Kässbohrer Setra S250 it has christened 'Europa Bus'.

The Setra joins a fleet of 11 coaches and will be used on Skinners' own holiday and day excursion programme and will also be available to corporate and private-hire customers.

'Europa Bus' is equipped with 48 reclining seats and seatbelts, toilet, fridge, hot drinks facilities and air conditioning.

It carries a distinctive livery designed by the operator and painted in Lincoln. The scheme incorporates a map of Europe, a compass, and 12 stars from the European flag. The stars are shaded through the spectrum.

ew Van Hool

HUGHES/DAF

Ikarus is a great performer

JOHN Leask & Son of Lerwick, Shetland Isles, has chosen an Ikarus 350-bodied DAF Bus SB3000WS.

Managing director, Peter Leask, a regular DAF buyer, says he was impressed with the performance offered by the 330 bhp engine now fitted, the full-air disc brakes on the front axle, and the level of specification included in the Hungarian-built Ikarus 350 coach body.

The coach, which is supplied by Hughes DAF, has 55 reclining seats, foot-rests, double-glazing, blinds to side windows, courier seat and pivot door.

Leask's runs 18 vehicles on a wide range of activities from school transport to Summer tours in Shetland.

HUGHES/DAF

Galloway's 'backbone' strengthened

GALLOWAY European Coachlines of Suffolk has taken delivery of two new DAF Bus SB3000WS coaches with Van Hool Alizee bodywork to operate on its expanding programme of school and public tours throughout the UK and Europe. The vehicles are equipped with 49 reclining seats, centre sunken toilet and inertia reel seatbelts, with TV/video and drinks facilities to be added.

Operations manager Robert Ryan said this was a further commitment to the DAF/Van Hool product, which now forms the backbone of the company's 33-vehicle fleet. Both coaches were supplied by Hughes DAF. CBW

SCANIA

EU-inspired livery for Midland Cruiser

Keep on cruising: Volvo and Scania share same colours

Switch from Volvo for new flagship

by Mike Morgan

STUART and Sue Cleaver have switched to Scania for the latest coach to join their Water Orton-based Midland United Transport operation.

Midland United, which brands its coach 'Midland Cruiser', will be operating this new Scania Irizar Century on UK and European tours plus National Express operations.

It is the company's first Scania and is painted in an EU-inspired colour scheme which made its debut on the Jonckheere-bodied Volvo B10M displayed at the Kortrijk show in 1989 (inset) before joining Midland United.

The new coach is on Scania K113CRB underframe, has Comfort Shift gearbox, Telma retarder and aluminium wheels.

Interior specification includes: 49 recliners plus courier, and air-conditioning.

SCANIA

Tribute to a real Boon

BOONS of Boreham has now taken delivery of the Scania Irizar Century coach shown at this year's Brighton Coach Rally as a tribute to the company's founder, Hector Boon.

Hector died days before the rally and the company's Setra won Coach of the Year.

However, one of his last active roles in the company was to fly out to Spain with Ian Hall of Scania Bus & Coach to agree the specification on a 51-seat tri-axle Scania Century (*CBW*, 27 April).

Although Hector officially retired last May, his love of getting involved in livery design and choice of moquette is evident in this coach.

PLAXTON

Beavers bring coach operation back to Dennis's

THE first of two executive specification Plaxton Beaver midicoaches has just joined the 40-strong fleet operated by Dennis's Coaches of Ashton-under-Lyne. It re-introduces coach operation to the company, whose main business is running local bus services in the Greater Manchester area.

"We have run coaches in the past," said director Roy Cooper. "That was our main business from 1973 until the late 1980s.

"With our experience running small buses — we have 32 Mercedes-Benz with Plaxton Beaver bodies — we decided there was an opportunity to get back into coaching, offering a well-equipped small vehicle aimed at the business market."

The 33-seat Beavers are on M-B 814D chassis/cowl and have air brakes and six-speed manual gearbox.

Dennis's second Beaver coach is due for August delivery.

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AEC/PLAXTON, 1978, 760 ZF, 57 seats, power door, re-trim, test September .....**£3,500 + VAT ono**

AEC/PLAXTON, 1976, 760 ZF, 53 seats, express door, re-panelled, test December .....**£3,000 + VAT ono**

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EAGRE 01427 612098

(63509/AEC)

AEC

1979 T, AEC 760, 12 metre Marshall bus body, 54 seats, PSV October '96, 60lb oil pressure, also 2 x 760 engines, can be heard running.

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(Essex)

(63651/BE)

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(63191/DD)

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(63545/DAF)

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(63512/MAN)

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£31,450 ovno

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(63544/ME)

MERCEDES

1991	H	609D, 21 seats	**£22,500**
1993	L	609D, 23 seats	**£29,500**
1993	L	711D, 19 seats + courier	**£34,500**
1994	L	711D, 24 seats	**£36,500**
1993	K	814D, 29 seats + courier, tables, coffee machine, forced air, reading lights.	**£44,500**

All are quality low mileage vehicles in excellent condition with long MoT's, radio and PA.

Tel. DALESMAN – LEEDS 01943 870228

(63332/ME)

MERCEDES 410D

L registered 16 seater, one owner from new, 12 months test, luxury spec, school contracts, local private hire, very clean and tidy throughout.

£16,500 + VAT

If this vehicle is not sold by mid July – will part exchange for P reg Sprinter.

Tel. 0151 526 8888

(63569/ME)

COACH SPEC 814, 33 forced air, **£56,000. 711,** 29 coach spec, **£48,000. 711,** 25 coach spec, **£47,000. 711,** 24 coach spec, **£43,000. 609,** 24 coach spec, **£40,000.** All luxury spec with power door and 3 point belts, Mercedes service spec. **709,** 29 + standees, **£43,500. 811,** 33 + 12 **from £50,000** plus auto and Telma. **Tel. Blythswood Motors on 0141 221 3165 or 0141 639 6107 evenings.** (63610/ME)

MERCEDES: IMMEDIATE DELIVERY. New Merc 814L, 6 cylinder engine, coachbuilt, 37 seat luxury coach, power door, manual or auto box, air suspension, **£79,000.** Most models from Urban Ranger; 47 + 23 standees, 811; 33 + 12 standees + Auto & Telma, 709; 29 + 8 standees + wheelchair vehicle and luxury coach spec. All in stock for instant delivery. P/X welcome. **Tel. Blythswood Motors on 0141 221 3165 or 0141 639 6107 evenings.** (63609/ME)

MERCEDES 608D, 1986, Alexander service bus, 21 seats, part Diptac, taxed, MoT March '97, recent gearbox, radiator, springs etc., some spares, **£4,450 + VAT. Tel. 01524 272239.**

(63540/ME)

MERCEDES 507, 16 seater or 12 with 2 wheelchairs, taxed and MoT'd, very spacious, recent conversion, vgc, **£8,500 ono + VAT. Tel. 01656 661484.**

(63592/ME)

SERVICE BUS, 1987, 31 seats, Mercedes 811D, excellent condition, 1 year test, **£16,500 + VAT ono. Tel. 01851 702114 (day) or 01851 830403 (eve).** (63578/ME)

MERCEDES 608D, 19 coach seats, twin tanks, new factory engine, MoT and taxed, **£4,750 + VAT. Tel. 01207 271792 (Durham).** (63581/ME)

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Fax: 01226 727607
Eves: 01226 716166

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MERCEDES 27/29 seat

709 service bus, Dormobile body, full repaint in white, full retrim, MoT April 97.

★★★★★★★★★★

MCW COACH,

28 coach seats, luggage racks, individual map lights, P.A. system, boot, curtains, Cummins engine, 5 speed manual box, LWB body, disc brakes, MoT April 97

Your Contact - Martin
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(63194/MB)

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Make	Model	Body	Seats	Bus or Coach	Year	MoT	Price	Prices Reduced
Merc	609	R/Burgess	21	Coach	Feb 87	Mar 97	~~£13,500~~	£11,500
Merc	709	R/Burgess	19	Coach	Mar 87	Jan 97	~~£13,500~~	£12,000
Merc	811	Coachcraft	24	Coach	Jan 88	Feb 97	~~£16,000~~	£13,500
Merc	609	R/Burgess	23	Coach	Apr 88	May 97	~~£15,000~~	£13,000
Merc	609	R/Burgess	23	Coach	June 88	June 96	~~£15,000~~	£13,000
Merc	609	Advance	20	Coach	Aug 88	July 96	~~£15,500~~	SOLD
Merc	507	R/Burgess	16	Coach	Nov 88	Aug 96	~~£10,500~~	£8,750
Merc	609	M 2 M	24	Coach	Jan 89	Oct 96	~~£16,000~~	£13,500
Merc	407	R/Burgess	15	Coach	Mar 89	May 97	~~£9,000~~	£8,000
Merc	609	Alexander	24	Coach	Apr 89	May 97	~~£16,000~~	£13,500
Merc	609	R/Burgess	20	Bus + 6	Sept 89	June 96	~~£15,500~~	£14,000
Iveco	49.10	Robin Hood	25	Bus + 6	July 87	May 97	~~£8,250~~	£5,750
Iveco	49.10	Carlyle	25	Bus + 8	Nov 90	Oct 96	~~£10,500~~	£9,500

ALL VEHICLES IN VERY GOOD CONDITION

PART EX considered on post '94 Mercs

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West Midlands (63529/MM)

1989 G FREIGHT ROVER, Carlyle MkII, 20-seat buses **£5,495**
1989 F RENAULT S56 MkII, Northern Counties, 23/25-seat buses **£5,695**
1989 F RENAULT S56 MkII, PMT, 25-seat bus, one only **£5,295**
1988 F FREIGHT ROVER, Carlyle MkII, 20-seat buses.....**£4,495**
1988 E FREIGHT ROVER, 350 Elme, 16-seat coach, luggage boot **£4,995**
1988 E FREIGHT ROVER, Carlyle MkII, 20-seat buses **£3,495**
1987 D DODGE S56, East Lancs, 24-seat coach **£4,995**
1987 D RENAULT S56, Reeve Burgess, 25-seat bus **£4,495**
1987 D IVECO 49.10 AUTO, Robin Hood, 21-seat buses **£3,995**
1986 D IVECO 49.10 MANUAL, Robin Hood, 19/21 seat buses **£4,195**
1986 D MERCEDES 608D, Reeve Burgess, 20-seat bus.....**£5,995**
1986 C FORD TRANSIT, Carlyle, 16-seat buses **£2,795**
1986 C LEYLAND CUB, Optare, 33-seat bus, automatic **£4,495**
1979 T BEDFORD PJK, Plaxton, 29-seat coach, retrim/respray included **£4,495**

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(63196/MB)

TOYOTA OPTIMO, 1985 'C', 21 reclining seats, beige moquette, curtains, white exterior, MoT July 1997. **Tel. 01525 722222 (Beds).** (63546/MM)

1991 FORD TRANSIT MINIBUS, LWB, petrol, 15 forward facing seats, excellent condition, MoT February '97, taxed, ready to work, **£4,750 – no VAT. Tel. 0181 599 3675.** (63568/MB)

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NEW STOCK
814 MERCEDES PLAXTON, Full luxury, 33 seats (1 week)
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811, 29/33 seat service spec, diptac
711 MERCEDES, 25 seats, coachbuilt, power door, deep boot
711 MERCEDES, 24 seats, van conversion, luxury coach spec, power door
609 MERCEDES VAN CONVERSION, 24 seats, power door, luxury
412 MERCEDES, 16 seater, luxury, seatbelts

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1990H TOYOTA OPTIMO, 21 seats, luxury, tv, etc, choice

(63359/MB)

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NEW TOYOTA OPTIMO III GL, 21 seats, grey interior, finished all white, immediate delivery from stock.

1992 K TOYOTA OPTIMO II GL, 21 seater + courier, radio, grey interior, finished all white, MoT Nov 1996, one owner
1987 E MERCEDES 609D REEVE BURGESS, 19 seater coach, large rear boot, parcel racks, radio, MoT July 1997.
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04685 48239
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21 seat minibus,
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Leyland Daf 400 LWB H/roof PAS Diesel lux h/spec minibus,
16 high back seats on tracking, soft trim, tinted windows, parcel racks, quad vent. rear saloon heater, lowered entrance step, radio cassette + 8 speakers, 4 interior lights with dim facility etc.
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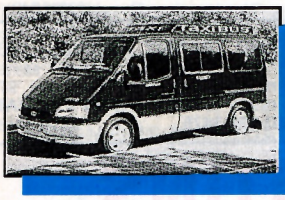

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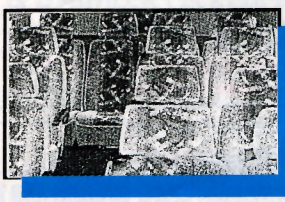

QUALITY and LUXURY. All Jubilee vehicles are finished to the very highest standards in the UK today. We have never built mundane vehicles and our quality is unsurpassed.

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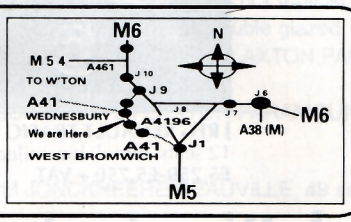

IVECO 49-10 EXECUTIVE PULLMAN. Either 16 passengers with a huge boot or 19 passengers and a small boot. This superb value for money range of luxury mini coaches is unbeatable.

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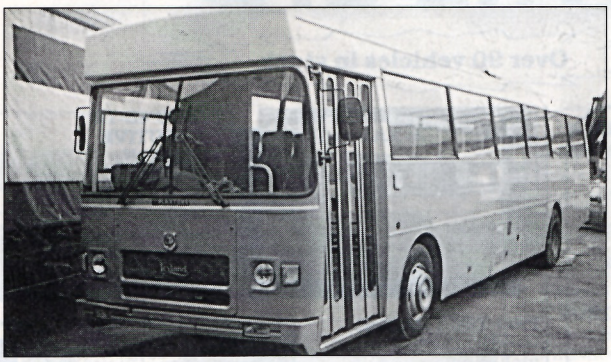

EX-MOD LEYLAND TIGER, Plaxton, 54 seater, up-market service bus, into service Dec '86, tinted glass, double passenger front entrance, TLII engine, 6-speed ZF gearbox, superb condition, sold with 12 months PSV, choice of 2.

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1990 H TALBOT 2.5 TRI-AXLE, 19 seats, wheelchair facilities, long MoT's, choice of white exterior, choice of 3.
1989 G FORD TRANSIT 2.5 DI, 14 seats, 3 point seatbelts, minibus, MoT Sept '96.
1988 E TALBOT EXPRESS 2.5 DI, side door, white exterior.
1987 E MERCEDES 609D, Reeve Burgess, 20 seat bus, power door, re-seated, re-floored, white exterior, MoT February 97.
1987 D/E TALBOT 2.5 TRI-AXLE, 20 seats, power door, luggage pen, Diptac spec, choice of 4.
1987 D FREIGHT ROVER 2.5, 16 seat luxury minicoach, MoT April 97.
1982 Y FORD 360 T DUPLE DOMINANT 4, 53 seat coach, white exterior, MoT May 96.
1979 T LEYLAND NATIONAL, S10 engine, 49 seats, 24 standees, MoT January 96.
1980 V LEYLAND LEOPARD PLAXTON SUPREME, 49 seats, cream exterior, power door, MoT October 96.
1979 PP VOLVO B58 AUTOMATIC VAN HOOL ARAGON, 48 seats, toilet, MoT March 96..
1979 T LEYLAND LEOPARD PLAXTON SUPREME, 49 seats, power door, destination gear, MoT October 96.
1976 P VOLVO ALISA ALEXANDER, double decker, 78 seat bus.
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96 LEYLAND DAF, 16 high roof, turbo.
95 TRANSIT 14, PSV, diesel.
94 TRANSIT 16, high roof, psv.
94 LEYLAND DAF, 20 seats, service bus.
91 TRANSIT, 16 high roof, coach spec.
90 OMNI 12/16 PSV + w/chasirs, air suspension, power door, low mileage.
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90 TRANSIT LWB, 12 seat diesel PSV.
90 MERCEDES 709, 25 coach, coach spec, p/door, coach built.
90 TRANSIT, diesel 15 PSV
90 H TRANSIT, 16 diesel PSV.
90 DUPLE 425, Cummins, 55 recliners, toilet, TV, 7 speed ZF.
89 DAF ALGARVE, exec, 11.6, toilet, TV.
89 TRANSIT, diesel, 14, PSV tested.
89 MERC, 14 coach seat, PSV, SLD, low mileage.
89 MERCEDES 208, 12 seat, diesel.
88 NEOPLAN, 77 seater, Merc V10 engine, ZF manual.
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88 LEYLAND SWIFT, 32 coach + wheelchair lift.
88 TRANSIT, 14 diesel, PSV.
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88 MERC 23, coach spec.
88 TRANSIT 12, diesel, psv, swb.
88 MERC 609, coach spec, 23 seats.
88 TRANSIT, diesel, 11 psv, swb.
88 F MERCEDES 709, 21 seat, coach spec.
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1990 BOVA FUTURA FHD 12.290, 49 reclining seats, courier seat, centre toilet, continental door.

1989 CHARISMA, 49 reclining seats, toilet, centre continental door, two video monitors, MoT 2/3/96.

1989 SETRA 215 HD, 49 reclining seats, centre sunken toilet, continental door, drinks machi SOLD y immaculate condition, available shortly.

1987 LEYLAND ROYAL TIGER, Van Hool Alizee, 51 reclining seats and courier seat, video and two monitors, rear saloon toilet, exterior white, MoT 9/11/96.

1987 OPTARE CITY PACER AUTOMATIC, Volkswagen diesel, bus spec, 25 seater.

1985 DAF MB200, Plaxton Paramount, 49 reclining seats, drinks machine, wired for video, toilet at rear offside, new MoT, very clean.

1985 MAN SR280, 53 reclining seats, courier seat, one owner from new, new MoT.

1984 BOVA FUTURA, 53 reclining seats, recent retrim, centre continental door, excellent condition, long MoT.

1982 VOLVO B58, Duple Dominant IV, 46 reclining seats, toilet, semi automatic, double glazed, power door.

1982 VOLVO PLAXTON VIEWMASTER, 53 seater, power door, radio/PA.

1982 VOLVO B10M PADANE, 49 reclining seats, courier seat, centre sunken toilet, continental door, very long MoT.

(63199/VSM)

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1994 VOLVO B10M VAN HOOL ALIZEE-HE 12M
49/53 recliners, grey/red moquette, centre sunken demountable toilet, continental door, double glazed tinted side windows, curtains, courier seat, water boiler, wired TV/video, power entrance door, finished white/rose/gold.
M.O.T. FEBRUARY 1997

1994 VOLVO B10M VAN HOOL ALIZEE-HE 12M
49/53 recliners, centre sunken demountable toilet, continental door, double glazed tinted side windows with roller blinds, wired TV/video, finished white.
M.O.T. OCTOBER 1996

1993 VOLVO B10M PLAXTON PREMIERE 350 12M
53 recliners, red/black stripe moquette, rear continental door, double glazed tinted side windows, courier seat, power entrance door, finished white/orange.
M.O.T. SEPTEMBER 1996

1993 BOVA FUTURA FHD 12.290 INTEGRAL 12M
51/55 seats, grey/red moquette, centre sunken demountable toilet, continental door, double glazed tinted side windows, curtains, courier seat, water boiler, wired TV/video, power entrance door, finished all white.
M.O.T. FEBRUARY 1997

1993 DENNIS JAVELIN CAETANO ALGARVE II 12M
53 recliners, beige/brown moquette, double glazed tinted windows, curtains, courier seat, power entrance door, finished duo blue.
M.O.T. JANUARY 1997

1991 (August) BOVA FUTURA FHD 12.290 INTEGRAL 12M
51/53 seats, beige/orange moquette, centre sunken demountable toilet, continental door, double glazed tinted side windows, curtains, courier seat, driver's sleeping berth. water boiler, wired TV/video, power entrance door, finished white/duo blue.
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53 recliners, seat belts, finished all white. 1 ONLY

NEW VOLVO B9M VAN HOOL ALIZEE-HE
38 recliners, rear toilet, CHOICE OF 2

1990 DAF SB3000 VAN HOOL ALIZEE-DH 12M
51/53 recliners, recently retrimmed in brown graffiti moquette, centre sunken demountable toilet, continental door, double glazed tinted side windows, curtains, courier seat, provision for driver's berth, water boiler, wired TV/video, low driving position, power entrance door, finished cream/duo brown.
M.O.T. NOVEMBER 1996

1990 TOYOTA CAETANO OPTIMO
21 seats brown/fawn moquette, courier seat, curtains, power entrance door, finished white.
M.O.T. APRIL 1997

1989 LEYLAND TIGER (Cummins 290) DUPLE 340 12M
53 recliners, brown/orange moquette, o/s rear sunken toilet, continental door, tinted side windows, curtains, water boiler, wired TV/video, power entrance door, finished cream/red/orange.
M.O.T. FEBRUARY 1997

1989 LEYLAND TIGER (Cummins 250) DUPLE 320 12M
57 seats, red moquette, tinted side windows, TELMA retarder, power entrance door, finished cream/red/orange.
M.O.T. DECEMBER 1996

1989 LEYLAND TIGER 260 DUPLE 320 12M
53 recliners, brown/orange moquette, double glazed tinted side windows with pull-down blinds, power entrance door, TELMA retarder, chassis autolube, finished all white.
M.O.T. MARCH 1997

1989 VOLVO B10M VAN HOOL ALIZEE-H 12M
52 recliners, brown/orange moquette, courier seat, tinted side windows, power entrance door, finished all white.
M.O.T. FEBRUARY 1997

1989 SCANIA K93 DUPLE 320 12M
55 seats, grey/orange moquette, tinted side windows, power entrance door, finished all white.
M.O.T. NOVEMBER 1996

1988 NEOPLAN SKYLINER (MERCEDES V10) DOUBLE-DECK
75 recliners, (57 upper saloon/18 lower saloon), red/orange moquette, courier seat, water boiler, fridge, 2 tables, o/s rear toilet, wired TV/video, power entrance doors, finished metallic silver/grey.
M.O.T. DECEMBER 1996

1988 LEYLAND TIGER 260 PLAXTON PARAMOUNT 3500 12M
49 recliners, red/grey moquette, sunken toilet o/s rear, continental door, double glazed side windows, curtains, courier seat, water boiler, finished cream/grey.
M.O.T. JANUARY 1997

1986 DAF DKVL PLAXTON PARAMOUNT 3500 12M
53 recliners, grey/blue moquette, courier seat, continental door, tinted side windows, TELMA retarder, power entrance door, finished cream/duo blue. CHOICE of 2.
M.O.T.'S JANUARY/APRIL 1997

(63187/VSG)

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1987 IVECO 49.10 SERVICE BUS, 19 seats + 6 standees, taxed and tested.

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1983 PLAXTON PARAMOUNT 3200 Express, 53 seats, semi auto, repanelled and painted white, test Jan '97.

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1980 10.3 metre MkII, 680 engine, "B" series specification, new tyres, repainted white, long test.

LEYLAND ATLANTEAN
AN68's. Alexander bodies, 82 & 86 seaters, single door, R-V reg, large choice, various tests.

DAIMLER FLEETLINE
1976/7, Alexander bodies, 74 seats, choice.

BRISTOL
L.H.S., 1975 PLAXTON SUPREME Express, Mk IV front, 33 seats, long test.

MIDIBUSES ETC.
1990 'G' DODGE, Reeve Burgess bodies, 25 bus seats, Torqueflite auto gearboxes, full test, choice.
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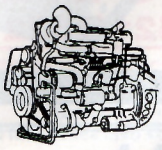

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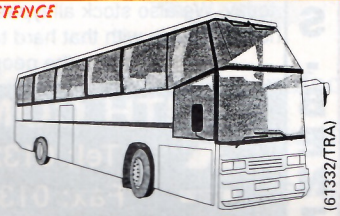

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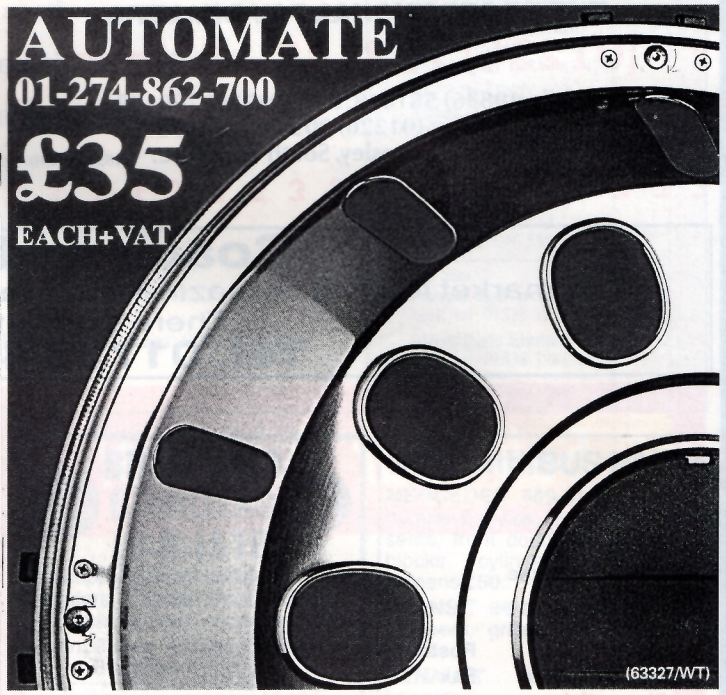

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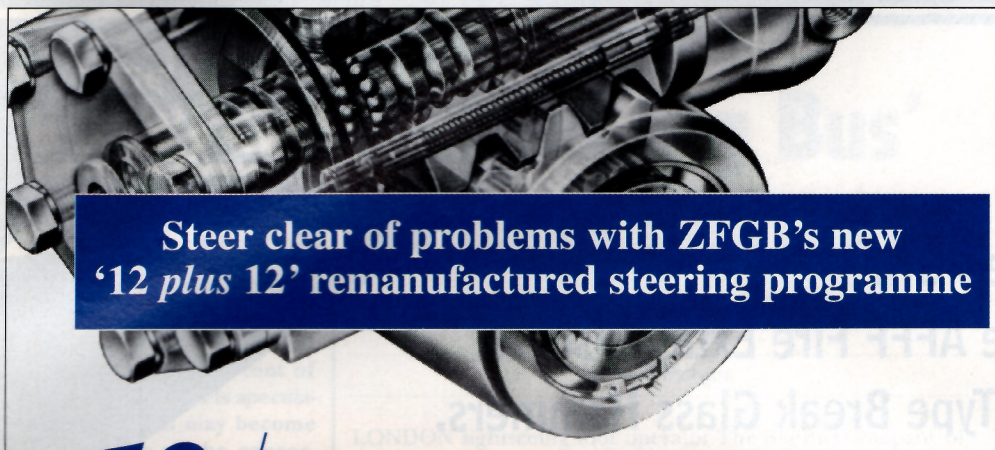

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(63200/APP)

Say you saw it in CBW

▼ Coach

Mills a boon

ADAM Mills, deputy chief executive of National Express and, until now, front runner successor to current chief executive Ray McEnhill, has been seconded to London & Continental Railways (LCR), the consortium which is to build the Channel tunnel rail link. NatEx has 17 per cent of LCR and the move fuels speculation that Mr Mills may become chief executive of the consortium, leaving the race for the Nat Ex post wide open.

▼ Manufacturing

Berkhof post

THE Berkhof Group has strengthened its management with the appointment of Mr R D Bebelaar as commercial manager of Berkhof Holding BV in Valkenswaard, The Netherlands. Previously Mr Bebelaar, 47, was with Fokker Aircraft BV in Amsterdam where he held various management positions since 1985.

▼ Bus

Clark is Big Bus' general manager

Former LBL and Stagecoach man joins op

by Mike Morgan

LONDON sightseeing tour operator The Big Bus Company of Wimbledon has appointed **David Clark** general manager.

Mr Clark, 48, worked within London Buses for 25 years and was most recently with Stagecoach East London where he was operating manager of Romford and Barking depots.

His new appointment follows a vacancy created by the death in April of operations manager, Steve Wilmhurst. The Big Bus Company is currently advertising for two duty managers to support the general manager's position.

Mr Clark told *CBW*: "I was attracted by the enthusiasm and commitment of The Big Bus Company to provide the best sightseeing tour in London. Live commentary on every tour and a regular service are just two of the features I believe give us the edge.

"I will now be looking to improve the efficiency of the company and increase our market share even further while, at the same time, remembering the very important part all the staff play in our success."

David Clark: 25 years with LBL

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The PSV industry's news weekly

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1. What is your primary job title?

(Tick one only)

Owner/Director ❒ 01
Senior/General Manager ❒ 02
Engineering/Service Manager ❒ 03
Other (please specify) ❒ 04

2. What is your company's main business function?

Bus Operator ❒ 01
Coach Operator ❒ 05
Coach & Bus Operator ❒ 02
Local Government ❒ 03
Other (please specify) ❒ 04

3. How many vehicles does your company own/operate?

(Tick all that apply)

	Buses	Coaches
1-5	❒ 01	❒ 10
6-10	❒ 02	❒ 11
11-15	❒ 03	❒ 12
16-25	❒ 04	❒ 13
26-39	❒ 05	❒ 14
40-100	❒ 06	❒ 15
101-400	❒ 07	❒ 16
401-1000	❒ 08	❒ 17
1000 +	❒ 09	❒ 18

4. Do you have responsibility for the recommendation/ purchase and/or specification of the following?

(Tick all that apply)

	Pur	Spec	Rec
Vehicles	❒ 01	❒ 12	❒ 23
Parts/Spares	❒ 02	❒ 13	❒ 24
Oil/Fuel	❒ 03	❒ 14	❒ 25
Breakdown	❒ 04	❒ 15	❒ 26
Insurance/Finance	❒ 05	❒ 16	❒ 27
Fuel Cards	❒ 06	❒ 17	❒ 28
Training	❒ 07	❒ 18	❒ 29
Venue/Attraction Tickets	❒ 08	❒ 19	❒ 30
Ferry Crossing	❒ 09	❒ 20	❒ 31
Hotel Bookings	❒ 10	❒ 21	❒ 32
Theatre Tickets	❒ 11	❒ 22	❒ 33
Other (please specify)			❒ 34

5. What type of work does your company undertake?

(Tick all that apply)

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Return to: Kerry Young, *Coach and Bus Week*, Subscription Department, EMAP Automotive Ltd., Wentworth House, Wentworth Street, Peterborough PE1 1DS
or phone 01733 467051 *today*

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Ref: 6884

1993 K Volvo B10M Premiere 350, 49 reclining seats
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Ref: 7007

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Ref: 6888

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